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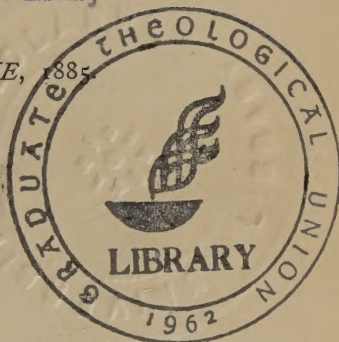
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*I. Sermon.*

18893

GOD'S PATHWAY FOR THE SOUL OF MAN.

BY THE REV. CANON LIDDON, D.D., D.C.L.\*

"Show Thou me the way I should walk in ; for I lift up my soul unto Thee."—PSALM cxliii. 8.

DAVID, driven from his home by his rebellious son, and flying for his life, utters, out of the depths of his bewilderment and pain, a cry for guidance. The voice we may still believe, is the voice of David, rather than that of some later composer or compiler of hymns, who is endeavouring to render in David's manner thoughts and feelings which he conceives to be appropriate to David's circumstances. The language is such as David might have used ; nay, he does use some of it elsewhere, and he is not afraid to repeat himself in words which he has used before, if they will express his meaning better than words altogether new to him.

It is a mistake to attribute to a primitive age the artificial compositions of a comparatively later age, or obedience to those canons of literary propriety which imply the

\* Preached before the University of Oxford, November 9th, 1884.

activity, and it may be the sensitiveness, of our modern times.

Yes, the voice is David's voice, and the trouble which is upon him is heavier than that which he had to bear in earlier years at the hands of Saul. In that earlier time David might have felt that he was suffering undeservedly, that his trouble was not a punishment, but a probation. Not so in the great humiliation and danger of his maturer life, when wrong-doing had deeply stained his soul, and the keen sense of Absalom's ingratitude was sharpened by the consciousness of his own ill-deserts.

The Psalms of the rebellion differ from the Psalms of the persecution under Saul, in that a strain of penitence mingles with the narrative of misfortune and suffering. That an ambitious young man should have so easily overthrown a strong government was itself suggestive. Absalom's success could not be really accounted for by his good looks, or by his popular manners, or by his splendid retinue, or by the widespread discontent of the tribe of Judah with David's domestic policy. The truth was that the old respect for him had been largely undermined by his conduct; and under a system of personal government, respect for the ruler is essential to social safety. David's own conscience ratified the tacit verdict which his people had passed upon him; and when he fled across the Jordan, while Absalom took possession of his palace and his throne, he recognised the hand, not of his undutiful son, but of his Lord and Judge. And thus, in the last of those seven Psalms, which have for so many ages nourished and expressed Christian repentance, David mingles with his pathetic review of his reverses a loyal prayer for mercy and guidance: "Enter not into judgment with Thy servant, O Lord, for in Thy sight no man living is

righteous. For the enemy hath persecuted my soul ; he hath smitten my life down to the ground ; he hath laid me in the darkness, as the men that have been long dead. Therefore is my spirit vexed within me, and my heart within me is benumbed. . . . O let me hear Thy loving-kindness betimes in the dawn of the morning, for in Thee is my trust ; show Thou me the way I should walk in ; for I lift up my soul unto Thee."

I. "The way that I shall walk in." David was thinking, no doubt, of some path across the mountains of Gilead, by which he might hope to make good his escape in that hour of danger. For the insurrection was triumphant. Ahithophel was still guiding the counsels of Absalom, and Ahithophel was for no half measures with the fallen king. Absalom's army would presently move eastward and sweep the valley of the Jordan ; the wild hills of Gilead had dangers that were all their own ; and beyond them was the desert. In his bewilderment and distress, David cries to God, "Show Thou me the way I should walk in ; for I lift up my soul unto Thee."

Now, was that the whole of David's meaning when he uttered the prayer ? Did he in any sense anticipate the meaning which his words would carry to the millions who have since made these words their own ? Was the letter already shading off into the spirit ; the nearer into a more distant future ; the way of escape from the bands of Absalom into the way of righteousness and the way of everlasting life ?

Everywhere in the Psalter the outward and visible world is made to clothe the supersensuous in a dress that shall render it intelligible and welcome to us who pass our lives among the things of sense. A vivid picture of the storm of Lebanon in one Psalm, the account of the dangers

experienced by the returning Jews of the Dispersion, whether in the desert or on the Mediterranean, in another, are more than descriptions of outward occurrences. There are perspectives in Holy Scripture where one world melts away imperceptibly into another ; in the distant view the sky seems to mingle with the ocean, and the clouds with the snow-capped mountain on which they rest. Nor is the language which hovers thus uncertainly on the frontier of two worlds peculiar to the Bible. It has its place in universal literature. The "fierce winds and tempests" in the most beautiful of the sonnets of Tasso are not merely those which he encounters on the Adriatic. The "kindly light," and the "encircling gloom," of one nearer and better known to ourselves than he, when becalmed in the straits of Bonifacio, mean more than the physical incidents which immediately suggested them.

David, too, would have been thinking of other "ways" than that across the hills of Gilead. For the soul of man is perpetually moving, in whatever direction, through the wilds of moral and intellectual space : and the various directions which its thought, feeling, and action take, are variously characterized in Scripture. On the one hand we read of "The way of understanding," "the way of righteousness," "the way of truth," "the way of God's testimonies," "the way of wisdom," "the way of life," "the way of good men," "the way everlasting," "the right way," "the way of the Lord," "the way of peace"; and on the other we are told of "the way of the froward," "the way of evil men," "the way of man's heart," "the way that is not good," "the way that seemeth right unto a man, while the end thereof are the ways of death." And so particular types of human life, "the way of David," "the way of Asa," "the way of Jehoshaphat," contrast with



"the way of Cain," "the way of Jeroboam," "the way of the house of Ahab," "the way of Manasseh." And thus the expression comes to mean a certain moral and mental temper, or a body, or system of doctrines, or precepts, whether false or true, which claim to be, and are treated as forming the path to a higher or to a lower world. When Amos speaks of "the way of Beersheba" he means all that was involved in the popular devotion to the local idol; when St. Paul remembers how before his conversion he persecuted "this way" unto the death, he refers to the body of truths and precepts which were taught and obeyed in the Church of the Apostles.

To the same purpose are "the two ways" of which we have been lately reading in that singular product of Judaizing Christianity when now almost at the point of separation from the apostolic Church, and becoming the sect which is known in history as Ebionitism—the "Doctrine of the twelve apostles." And a like phraseology is to be found in the later Stoicism and still more in the Koran, where the scriptural expression, "The Way of God," is applied in successive suras to that unhappy conglomerate of simple truths and vulgar imposture, of lofty with deeply debased morality, which has for so long been allowed to darken and oppress the Christian East.

Above all, we must not forget that the spiritual sense of the expression before us has received a consecration which can never for long be absent from Christian thought. We know Who has said "I am the Way." By His teaching about God and about man, by the example which He has left us, that we should follow His steps, by the death which He suffered that He might bring us to God, by the gift of His Spirit who leads the sons of God on their

pathway to their true home ; by the renewal of our nature through incorporation with Himself in the Sacraments of the Gospel, He is, as no other is or can be, "the Way," by which men must walk through the days of time to the gate of eternity.

II. Now this petition for guidance, like all serious prayer, implies a faith, a faith which at once dictates and shapes it. The *lex credendi* is also the *lex supplicandi*. Two truths, at least, prompt and govern the prayer.

Of these, the first is, that one path enables each man to correspond with the true ideal of his life. "The way that I should walk in." One path only is perfectly loyal to the highest truth that has been placed within each man's reach. Only one path, and not many, enables each man to make the most of his faculties and of his opportunities, to develop most harmoniously his intelligence, his affections, his will, his character ; to satisfy most adequately the just claims that others may make on him ; to satisfy the demands of Him to whom the gift of existence itself is due. Other paths may offer something which this withholds—greater and wider outlook in some one direction, more excitement, distraction, amusement, as the case may be. One only, let us be sure of it, leads in a direct line to the true goal of existence ; while others do but lead thither painfully, after long circuits, and by many vicissitudes ; if indeed they enable a man to reach it at all—if they do not mislead him altogether.

And the second implied and governing truth is this ;—that there is one Being, at any rate, who sees and can tell each one of us what this his path should be. A clear sight of the track along which each of His responsible creatures should walk with the view of making the best of the gift of life, is the least that can be ascribed to an Intelligence

that knows no bounds, and to a Will by whose good pleasure we each and all exist. A willingness to show each one of us what He thus sees to be the best for each may be reverently taken for granted in Him who is not only and chiefly Power and Intelligence, but also, and especially, Goodness.

To direct the traveller who has not found, or who has lost his road, is the instinct, the good instinct of our common humanity, even at its lowest and its worst; and it is surely inconceivable that the Being who made us what we are should be able, yet unwilling, to answer the prayer of his creatures—"Show Thou me the way I should walk in; for I lift up my soul unto Thee."

III. Now, if it be asked how God does answer this prayer, I answer, first of all, and generally by the language of events, by that importunity of circumstances which, in different degrees, accompanies every human life. It matters not that the environment of every life can be traced to antecedents, and these to other antecedents that have preceded them till the long evolutionary process is lost sight of in the distant haze. It matters not because, first, we know that a point must at last be reached where no material antecedent is discoverable, and where bare existence can only be accounted for by the fiat of a Creative Will; and secondly, because the relation of each antecedent to that which precedes and follows it, the direction and law of this long evolutionary sequence—if so we must provisionally term it—itself implies, no less than its first impact implies, a presiding and guiding Mind.

Yes, to-day, no less than in the days of the patriarchs and prophets, the circumstances which surround our lives are God's own language, which may be interpreted by reason and by conscience. They may tell each of us how

He would have us spend His sacred gift of existence. And thus, in a great number of cases, the question which a young man, who thinks at all, asks himself at some time, "What is the best thing that I can do with my life?" is answered decisively by the circumstances in which he finds himself. The wishes of his parents, the means at their disposal, the bias of his own highest thoughts and dispositions, the course of his education, the sympathies of his contemporaries, the leading events and opportunities of the hour, not to speak of those unforeseen and incalculable occurrences, which at some time or other flash a ray of light from above on every career—these are among the ingredients which rightly go some way to form a decision which may be reverently presumed to be in accordance with the Will of God. No imperative call of truth or duty disturbs this claim of actual circumstances. It is not with Isaac as it had been with Abraham; it is not with Solomon as it was with David. Many a man may read an answer to his prayer, written thus legibly in everything and every one around him, and he has but to follow its guidance.

But this is not always the case. For some of the noblest that have lived, the way traced originally by circumstances has not been the way in which they have had to walk. For them life could only be made the best of by deliberately neglecting this original guidance in obedience to a higher guidance that has obviously traversed it. So it was with Abraham and Moses; so also with David and Elisha; so it was with each and all of Christ's apostles when they forsook all and followed Him. So it was especially with St. Paul. He had prayed these very words as a Jewish Rabbi, "Show Thou me the way I should walk in; for I lift up my soul unto Thee"; and the answer came to him on the road to Damascus, and he obeyed that answer




until the day when they led him out to die on the road to Ostia.

IV. But independently of that which belongs to single lives, there are certain broad characteristics of the pathway which God has traced for the soul of man. Man's will, as well as his understanding, needs the guidance of truth. Man's character needs the discipline of sacrifice. And He who said, "He that followeth Me walketh not in darkness," said also, "Let a man take up his cross and follow Me."

What then are the characteristics of this truth which can furnish true guidance to the soul of man, and which thus is the answer to the prayer of the Psalmist?

I. It will first of all be positive, and not merely negative truth. The Psalmist prays God to show him, not the way in which he should not walk, but the way in which he should.

It might be unnecessary to say this, if it were not for the fact that much of the interest felt by us men in the highest subjects is a negative interest. Bishop Hall observed in his day that many persons appeared to measure their nearness to heaven by their distance from Rome. And, indeed, the religion of multitudes would seem to be largely a religion of rejection—the emphatic, boisterous, reiterated rejection of the religion of somebody else. The rejection may be justifiable or necessary; the rejector, beyond question, may be serious and earnest; but surely little, very little, has been done to guide the soul when it knows only what not to believe, and what not to do. We are all of us tempted at times to waste a great deal of energy in contemplating the ways in which we should not walk. To do so enables us to enjoy the subtle satisfaction of feeling that we are interested in religion. The mind is, of course,



to a certain extent, occupied with the very practices or tenets which it rejects. It naturally feels itself to be in an attitude very different from, and superior to, that of mere vulgar religious indifference. It gives some thought to the highest questions; it makes some moral effort in the pursuit of truth. And then a negation can be welcomed by the soul very cheaply. A negation asks for no prayer, no obedience, no self-discipline; it puts us for the moment in great good humour with ourselves, and we have nothing to pay for its services.

Doubtless there are times in the history of the Church and the soul when there is urgent need for the strenuous rejection of what is false and wrong. The half-Jewish Christianity which St. Paul combats in his great epistles, would have obscured the work and Person of the Redeemer, and would have dwarfed down a Church that was to embrace the world to merely national proportions. And Mr. Carlyle's biographer has lately told us that while in earlier years Carlyle had spoken contemptuously of the Athanasian controversy, and the Christian world rent in pieces over a diphthong, and would ring the changes in broad Annandale on Homoiousion and Homooousion, he afterwards perceived Christianity itself to have been at stake. "If," he said, "the Arians had won, Christianity would have dwindled away into a legend." So in the sixteenth century it was impossible not to protest against a traffic in indulgences which threatened to turn the Western Church into a vast market for spiritual drugs; nor was it less necessary, with the great Bishop Bull, to reject theories of justification, or, it may be added, of assurance, which first saw the light in the sixteenth century, which gravely misrepresent the sense of St. Paul, and which, could they have been accepted, would fatally imperil the Christian

faith, by establishing a divorce between the work of the Redeemer and the moral well-being of mankind.

Yes, the rejection of error is at times indispensable to the reception or the retention of truth. It is the concave which the convex already implies : " If you obey St. John you repudiate Cerinthus." But of, and by itself, a negation is worthless. Nothing more can be done with it ; it is mere vacuity ; it yields no footing to the soul ; it has done its work by being uttered and agreed to. After all, we are justified by faith, not in what we do not believe, but in what, or rather in Him Whom, we do. When it is plain ✓ that a given path is not the way in which we should walk, nothing is gained by lingering in its neighbourhood ; our wisdom is to try another. " Show Thou me the way I should walk in ; for I lift up my soul unto Thee."

2. Again, the truth which is to serve as the pathway to the human soul must be definite. The road that will bring us home at last must be plain to the eye, and firm beneath the feet. It must not lose itself in a forest ; it must not sink away into a morass. The Psalmist prays for guidance ; and indefinite guidance is all but a contradiction in terms.

The honour assigned to indefiniteness in some modern theories of religious belief, is partly due to a weakened faith, and partly to æsthetic preferences. In works of imagination the indefinite has its place. Where all is clear there is not sufficient room for the play of fancy. The over-exact is also the unpicturesque. Some popular accounts of religious belief may remind us of those paintings in which a vast mass of cloud is deliberately projected across the canvas, thus relieving the artist of the task of elaborating the scene with completeness and in detail, and setting the fancy to work upon the question as to what may conceivably be behind the cloud.

But the human soul, feebly struggling upwards against serious obstacles, and beset by fierce enemies, cannot afford to look at these questions of life and death as if they belonged to the province of art criticism. The soul asks to know precisely what it must believe, what it must do. It asks for a creed and a moral code with clearly specified contents and with a sharply-traced frontier. And if it only receives by way of reply a sketch, whether of truth or conduct, too vague and indistinct even to be registered by the understanding ere it can even begin to invigorate the will, then the soul will feel that such guidance does, however unintentionally, but mock its agony, and the glow of earnestness which just now inspired it will die back to indifference, or at least into despondency. And if it be said that such a sketch is in reality all that is forthcoming, then it must be answered, that in that case silence would be better than speech. For silence still leaves room for hope to the petitioner, whilst speech, if it be only a revelation of the vague, is the signal of something like despair.

It is true enough that Christians in their anxiety to satisfy this deep need of the human soul have, from time to time, attempted definitions which were in fact impossible—impossible because no knowledge that would warrant them had been placed by God at the disposal of the Church. But, at least, in our day and country the danger does not lie in this direction. The general current sets steadily against definite convictions. "To be definite," we are told, "is inevitably to be narrow"; and narrowness is deemed less venial than disloyalty to truth. Certainly, definite statements are apt to be exacting, but in objecting to them our quarrel lies not, as we may suppose, with the Church, so much as with the Gospel. The Gospel ought to be rewritten if Christianity is to become what some



sections of the thought of our day would fain hope to make it. Instead of saying, "Narrow is the way, and few there be that find it," our Lord surely should have said, "Wide is the way, and no one can well miss it." Instead of "I am the Way and the Truth," He should surely have said "I am one of the ways, one of the truths by which humanity may attain to the Father of spirits." Had the Apostles shared this temper of our age St. John would not have written, "He that abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God"; he would have contented himself with saying that to accept the Christian doctrine is probably to know more about God than can be known from other sources. And St. Peter, instead of warning us, "Neither is there salvation in any other than Jesus Christ," would have thought it enough to urge that "Christ is one of those teachers who appear to have done most for the improvement of the human race."

Certainly the revelation of God in Christ, whatever else it may be, is definite. It fulfils that forecast of the prophet that a day would come when the teachers of the true Israel would not be removed into a corner any more, when men's eyes should see their teachers, when they should hear a word behind them saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left." We need not be in doubt about the nature and attributes of God, or the way of approach to Him, through His blessed Son, Jesus Christ, God and man, or the reality of redemption from sin and death, or the enlightening and sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit, or our union with God through those means of grace which convey to us the divine humanity of the Saviour, and which He has left to be with us to the end of time. As to these central truths of the Christian revelation there is definite information

enough within our reach. Nor is there any real room for doubt as to the precise meaning of the precepts which should govern Christian conduct. If we neglect such commands as "Love your enemies," "Do good to them that hate you," "Be clothed with humility," "Be patient towards all men," it is not because their import is vague; but for another reason, my brethren, which your conscience and mine will supply only too readily.

3. Once more, the truth which will conduct the soul heavenward must be truth which the soul knows to be independent of itself. "Show Thou me the way I should walk in." The truth that will support our steps is true, whatever we may think or feel about it. It has, in modern phrase, an objective existence.

The antithesis of subjective and objective in the broad, metaphysical, absolute sense of thought, as contrasted with reality, as distinct from the narrow, logical, and relative sense which had been assigned to these terms by the schoolmen, has been, since Kant, generally accepted in the language of the educated world. Whatever may be said about the employment of the terms which express the distinction, the distinction itself is as old as human thought. No sooner did man begin to observe the action of his mind with the view to sifting out truth from error, than he became conscious of himself as a thinking subject, as distinct from while busied upon the material or object of his thought. And then arose the anxious, haunting question whether that object was real at all; whether the beings or qualities, substances or relations, bodies or spirits, present to his mind had in themselves an actual existence, corresponding to the impression received within. We know how those old sophists, Protagoras and Gorgias, in their different manners dealt

with this problem. "Man is the measure of all things," said one; "Absolute truth is inaccessible to the human mind," said the other. Eighteen centuries before Hume or Kant, the relation of cause and effect had been pronounced by a Greek thinker to be only a form of thought to which nothing corresponds in the outer world of fact; and Kant's great service in another direction must not make us forget the use that he made of the distinction which his authority has popularised between subject and object. By insisting, as he does, that man cannot know whether there be any objective counterpart to those necessary ideas which lie at the basis of human thought, Kant was betrayed into one of those exaggerations which are soon and inevitably counterbalanced by another. This utter divorce between thought and being provoked the growth of a philosophy which somewhere in the depths of the infinite would altogether identify all being with all thought; but the value of the distinction before us is independent of the speculations which have been connected with it, and its value is not inconsiderable in the region of theology.

If, as has been said, it is a vital question for philosophy to know that real existence, while distinct from the thought whose object it is, is not altogether beyond its reach, how much more is this knowledge necessary to religion! For without this assurance how can religion exist at all? What is religion but a disposition of the soul, at once a passion and a virtue, whereby the soul is bound to and depends upon a Being distinct from and infinitely higher than itself? How does religion stir in the soul, but in the effort—it may be feeble and intermittent,<sup>¶</sup> it may be passionate and persistent—to escape from the blindness and weakness of self to the feet of One who is strong,

wise, holy, One on whom it can indeed depend? How will religion fare if, at the outset, or in the mid agony of this effort it encounters the dreadful suspicion that He to whom it fain would fly or on whom it would hang, is, after all, but a creation of the very self from which it would escape; an ideal form, traced erewhile by self's own finger on the walls of its own narrow prison-house; to which nothing certainly corresponds beyond! Even the heathen workman could not be persuaded to worship the statue which he well knew that his own hands had carved; and to deny the objectivity of religious truth is to sign the death warrant of religious effort.

It will hardly be questioned that the Church of Christ, from the Apostles downward, has assumed where she has not insisted upon the objectivity of truth. God is what He has revealed Himself to be, whatever men may think about Him. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, however the tide of speculation beneath His throne may distort, disfigure, degrade Him. His Blood has atoning power to the end of time, whether you and I make it our own by faith or not. His Spirit illuminates, invigorates, purifies, whether we correspond with His influences or not. The written word is the inspired and authoritative record of His will, be the last fugitive utterances of our criticism upon it what they may. And it is with His grace as with His truth. He is with us in the great Sacrament of His death, present in virtue of His own consecrating word, present independently of anything that we may be, or feel, or think, though only present to bless us if we approach Him with penitence and faith. Yes, Lord Jesus, it is true of other than the physical heavens that "they shall perish, but Thou remainest; they all shall wax old as a garment, and as a vesture shalt Thou

change them, and they shall be changed ; but Thou art the same."

4. Yet, once again, the truth that is to form a pathway for the human soul will be in its import especially practical; "The way that I should walk in" suggests practice rather than speculation. *Οὐ γνώσις ἀλλὰ πράξις* was the saying of one who knew human nature well.

There are many interesting paths across the world of thought that have no ascertainable relation to practice. In Christian theology this holds good not of the contents of divine revelation, but of many speculations about it. Nothing that properly forms a part of the deposit of the faith is without its bearing, remote and indirect, or direct and immediate on the Christian life. St. Paul's teaching on justification, for instance, is a subject of the highest speculative interest, yet its relations to Christian duty are intimate and constant; and even when his discussion seems to be most purely abstract and controversial, it is fraught with considerations of the greatest practical moment. The propositions of the Athanasian Creed may at first sight look like the deposits of some Old World religious philosophy, uncritically applied to the historical facts of Christianity, but a closer examination shows that they do but bring before the intelligence of faith that living Being whom truly to know is everlasting life, yet respecting whom, human thought is constantly prone to fall into certain grave misapprehensions. On the other hand, in the writings of great schoolmen such as Aquinas, and still more in not a few of those Lutheran authors who preceded the rise of Pietism there are speculative discussions which it is difficult to connect at all with practice. They are like those excursions after unremunerative curiosities which a traveller is tempted to make when he ought to be setting



his face steadily towards home, and taking care that every step brings him nearer to it.

The world in general attaches a sense to the word academical of which a university may be pardonably impatient. An academical discussion in ordinary language means a discussion which, however interesting as an exercise, leads to no practical results. It may be said that study and practical life are different things, and that those who devote themselves to the one are not well fitted to do justice to the work of the other. If this apology holds good, as it may in other quarters of learning, it can scarcely be thought satisfactory in the field of theology. For by its own admissions Christian truth is nothing if it be not practical. God's word is a lantern unto the feet, and a light unto the path; Scripture is profitable for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, as well as for doctrine; Jesus Christ came to purify to Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. A representation of Christian truth, therefore, which has no relation to practice is a defective representation. It is even theoretically defective, because it misses the scope and purpose of the subject matter with which it would deal.

Now this is a point on which many writers of the ancient Church contrast honourably with those of our own day, who do not keep them in view as models. Compare, for instance, St. Chrysostom on the New Testament with an average German commentator—it might be invidious to mention names. St. Chrysostom, as a rule, begins his exposition with a few words which paraphrase the text before him, and which, since to him Greek was a living language, threw on it the same sort of light that does the Scholion on Aristophanes; but he hurries away from this into practical considerations, since he has before his eyes

the sins, the sorrows, the struggles, the dangers of Constantinople, and he is bent on doing all that he possibly can for it. But the German too often never succeeds in disentangling himself from the brushwood of preliminary criticism, which he conceives to be necessary in order to make the sense of the text sufficiently plain; and he is largely occupied not with the text itself, but with the writers who have immediately preceded him. He must demolish and expose the work of one contemporary; he can permit himself to concur only partially with another; against a third he is greatly concerned to vindicate his own originality in some earlier work, while a fourth is noticed as having failed to recognise the exact point on which at the moment he is himself insisting. And so his note runs on till we feel that the true sense and drift of the apostle is buried out of sight by controversial matter which, at least, has not the merit of being historical. So, to take two modern writers:—contrast Dr. Pusey's commentary on the minor prophets with the nearly contemporary work of Hitzig. Putting aside the critical questions as to which they are at issue, there is this broad feature of radical unlikeness between them, that while almost every line in the one commentary is an appeal and stimulant to the spiritual or moral faculty, the philological or ordinary critical judgment is alone interested from first to last in the other.

Surely, a Christian should not read his Bible or repeat his creed without asking himself the question, What does this statement say to me, what does it suggest, what does it command, what does it reprove in me? How can it contribute to lighten my path through time towards eternity? What dangers does it unveil, what encouragements does it proclaim, what obstacles does it remove, what efforts does

it warrant ? This practical instinct is always energetic in a seriously believing Christian, it is an inseparable corollary of the prayer, "Show Thou me the way I should walk in ; for I lift up my soul unto Thee."

\* \* \* \* \*

My brethren, these are among the commonplaces of religious wisdom, but they are not unlikely to be forgotten or ignored. The truth which will really serve us as a pathway to our true home must be positive, definite, objective, practical. Aye, some one says, if we only could tread that path as they did two centuries, one century, even fifty years since ! But how is it possible in days like ours, when the very air we breathe is charged with doubt ; when books and lectures, the novel and the magazine, the most serious endeavours of thought, and the lightest productions of fancy, conspire so generally to stifle or benumb the life of faith ? We envy, you say, those great and firm convictions of a bygone age, which gave strength and consistency to human character, and made death a bright and welcome prospect. Would that we could share them, if only to escape from the moral languor and the mental gloom which, as we know too well, are the portion of the doubter !

Well, my brethren, the real question for you is that which our Lord put to the paralytic at the pool of Bethesda, "Wilt thou be made whole ?" Believe that He addresses this question to you. Has doubt no subtle attractions which make it welcome to you ? Does it not flatter your self-love by the idea that it affords some species of intellectual distinction which is not enjoyed by a simple, believing Christian ? Does it not fall in with your impatience of moral restraints by whispering, like the tempter of old, "Hath God said ?" when the creed or the law of Christendom would make some claim upon your allegiance ?

Does it not leave you still at liberty, as you think, to admire the Gospels and Him whom the Evangelists describe—nay, even to kindle emotions by the piercing words which lie nearest to the heart of Christendom, while still you reserve to yourself a freedom to do and to be what you like? In short, are you perfectly sincere in wishing that you could believe? Then I answer, If you will you may. You would believe, you say, if the Gospel were only the Sermon on the Mount, if it were not weighted by the Creed. Do you mean even this? If so, you are not merely admiring the Sermon on the Mount, you are trying to put it into practice. And if you are doing this you are in a fair way to make a discovery which opens to you the road of faith. You will discover that it is easier to admire the Sermon on the Mount than to practise even a little of it; and that in proportion to the earnestness with which you endeavour to practise it will be your growing and deep dissatisfaction with, and distrust of, yourself. Out of the depth of that new sense of impotence and sin and shame, you will ask whether the Being of whose moral nature the Sermon on the Mount must be a heaven-sent ray, has done nothing to pardon, nothing to console, nothing to aid and raise that life of humanity which offers to the Divine ideal so tragic a contrast. You will be disposed to do some sort of justice to the evidence on the subject. We Christians know that our faith is the adequate, nay, the only adequate, answer to the question: but you, too, will share our conviction if you only give the Author of your being credit for such an amount of goodness as you would take for granted in an average fellow-creature, by asking Him to guide you. “Oh, Thou who must have made me, leave me not entirely to myself, show me the way I should walk in; for I lift up my soul unto Thee.”

This is the first, and it is the great step on the road to faith. It is later on, often quite at the end, that we discover that the pathway of faith is for us too the road of sacrifice. For human life is like the fruit of the vine; it only yields its best when it has been crushed. Even the Most Holy when He was among us was made perfect through suffering. In early years when health is unimpaired and spirits are buoyant we naturally shrink from these, the higher secrets of the true life. We mean to be disciples, but in our own fashion; we ask to sit on the right hand or on the left in the Kingdom. We dream not of the chalice and of the baptism that at some time await us. But a day comes when the road before us divides, and while it is possible that both paths may be in a sense lawful, one only is marked as the Way of Sacrifice. The higher conscience, the conscience which the will has not coerced or driven, but for which all that is best in us has endeavoured to secure both truth and freedom—this conscience points one way; and some disguised instincts, whether of ambition or gain, or ease, point another. Such a day is fraught with moral consequences enduring and momentous; we decide, it may be, once for all.

“ Heaven above our head  
 Watches us in silent dread;  
 Solemn awe and stillness lies  
 On these vast societies,  
 While the angels stand around,  
 Breathless in suspense profound—

\* \* \* \* \*

And the acts of mortal men  
 Pass into that mirror's ken :

\* \* \* \* \*

And enshrined in silence, stay  
 To abide the Dreadful Day.



All is light, and stillness all,  
Like an ice-bound waterfall,  
Where the waves, all bright and hoar,  
Seem to pass, and be no more ;  
But there—fixed in durance—dwell  
Solid and immoveable.”

\* \* \* \* \*

Is it so that when all should be clear, the sky above seems dark, the air becomes thick with mist, and unanticipated difficulties stand across the path, while no human friend whom you can trust unreservedly is near at hand ? Then confidently offer the prayer “ Show Thou me the way I should walk in ; for I lift up my soul unto Thee.” He would not be what He is, if in His own best way He did not answer it : if to you, too, as to David, out of the oracle in a distant century there came not, through whatever organ, the reply—“ I will inform thee and teach thee in the way wherein thou shalt go, and I will guide Thee with Mine eye.”

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## *II. Expository Section.*

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### ST. PAUL AND HIS EPISTLES.

BY THE REV. ADOLPH SAPHIR, D.D.\*

“ Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus, which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons.”—  
PHIL. i. 1.

By far the greater part of the New Testament consists of epistles. Even of the five historical books which form the

\* Preached at the Belgrave Presbyterian Church, Halkin Street West, November 9th, 1884.

foundation, the Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles were addressed to Theophilus ; while it is evident from the concluding chapters of the Gospel of John that it also was directed to a special congregation of believers. This fact is most significant and instructive. The salvation of God which, in the incarnation, the sufferings, the resurrection, and the ascension of Jesus, and the outpouring of the Holy Ghost had been completed, was to be declared to mankind by men who themselves had experienced the power of the love of God. The apostles are the foundation upon which the whole Church of Christ is built ; they are continually guiding, comforting, and exhorting those who are called to form the Church of Christ ; and it was natural and most appropriate that the form in which they were to give their instruction was to be that of letters.

In a letter we not merely read sentences, but we hear a voice, we behold a countenance, we come into contact with a human heart. It is the *personal character* of letters which is the most important feature of them ; and these apostles, who themselves had seen and heard and tasted of the Word of Life, out of their own living experience and affection speak to us, and testify to us of the grace of God which is in Christ Jesus ; and therefore is it that they themselves, with a living voice, are speaking throughout all the ages, and fulfilling the mission which God had given to them, that through them as living channels there was to come to us the light of His truth.

And as letters are personal, so it is in letters specially that inward feelings and motives and experience find their expression—not merely outward facts, or the knowledge we have acquired, but rather the effect which these facts and which this knowledge have produced upon our own

character and upon our own mind,—the hold which they have taken of our feelings and of our own inward life. This most naturally expresses itself in the confidential form of letters ; and so is it that as in the Book of Psalms there is the response of the saints of God in the Old Testament times to what God had said, and what God had done, and what God had given, and what God had promised to His people, so in the epistles of the apostles we behold the response not merely in the hearts of the apostles, but also in the hearts of all those who, through Him, were converted to that wonderful salvation, full of light and joy, which in Christ Jesus had come to them.

*Personal* is the first characteristic of letters ; *experimental* is the second characteristic of letters.

There is another feature in letters which is worthy of notice, and which at first sight seems somewhat to lower their value and importance, and it is this : *that letters are the product of the moment*. They are occasioned by definite and temporary necessities and situations ; they are called forth by the occasion. A letter necessarily has a date, and that date explains it—explains the reason why it was written, explains the purpose for which it was sent, explains the feeling and the peculiar disposition in which it was composed. And so it was that the apostles did not give us a systematic exposition of the truths of Christianity ; but, according as misconceptions arose, according as errors were spread among the congregations, according as failures and falls and sins grieved their hearts, they poured out of the depth of their knowledge and of their affection the instruction and the exhortation which were needed ; and the fulness of the truth as it is in Jesus was brought out by occasions from time to time with a living and definite purpose. It is this which gives such a

vitality to the teaching of the apostles, and which shows us the truths as they are in Jesus, in their living influence upon our minds, and in their actual contact with the temptations and with the dangers which surround us as well as with the tendencies that are in human nature. *Because they are occasional, therefore are they eternal.* It is the very fact of their being definite and for a particular purpose which constitutes their vitality, and which makes them applicable from age to age, even until the Lord shall come again.

Personal, experimental, occasional—and for these reasons full of vitality.

Now of all human compositions letters seem to be the most ephemeral. Who, as a rule, takes an interest in letters except the persons to whom they are sent—and they only at the time when they receive them? No form of composition seems to be so temporary in its character and so limited in its scope as letters. And yet what a wonderful thing it is that these letters of the apostles are as fresh and young and powerful this day as they were when they were penned. What a wonderful thing it is that every Christian individual in attending to the growth of faith and love and hope in his own soul, and in taking heed to the path in which God has put him, with its duties and its trials, finds in these letters instruction and guidance, rebuke and consolation, coming to him with all the liveliness and with all the persuasiveness of a contemporary friend.

And, more than that, these letters which were written by the apostles seem to be sufficient for all the centuries and for the whole history of the Church, whether the Church planted among the Jews or among the Gentiles, in Europe, or in Asia or in Africa, in the first centuries or in these our present days. It is in these epistles that

there is given to the Church an ever-new unfolding of the character of God and of the fulness that is in Christ Jesus ; principles which are ever ready at hand to be applied to the various exigencies and duties of the day.

And more than that. Never is the Church of Christ in a crisis, never is the Church of Christ in a momentous period, when there is a great combat and a struggle, but these very epistles of the apostles come forward as pioneers, as defenders and champions. These very epistles come forward as the true latter-day pamphlets, the latter-day voice of God—showing the Church what is her present duty and what is her present task according to the will of God. So Luther and Calvin were only the echo, but the Epistles of Paul to the Romans were the voice, which, at the time of the Reformation, roused all Christendom to return to Scripture truth. This is the wonderful character of the apostolic epistles which, given by inspiration of God, and yet at the same time proceeding out of the very bowels and hearts of the apostles, run throughout all the ages instinct with vitality, overflowing with affection, and gifted with power to fulfil the great purpose of God.

Among all the epistles which we have in the New Testament, the Epistles of the Apostle Paul stand out more specially. He has written more epistles than the others, even as he laboured more abundantly than all the others. When I speak of the Apostle Paul as standing out among the apostles, I am not expressing myself accurately. He is not one among thirteen apostles ; he is one by himself. Special is his apostolate. There is a specialty about the apostolate of Paul of Tarsus which is entirely different from that of the Twelve. As he says himself, "According to *my* Gospel" ; not as if there was



any divergence between the teaching of the Apostle Paul and the teaching of the Twelve; not as if there was any separation either in thought or in affection between those who were the ministers of Christ among the circumcised and the apostle who was sent to the Gentiles. Most fully is that unison recorded to us in the Acts of the Apostles, where we see that He who was mighty with Peter among the Jews was with Paul among the Gentiles. And still more touching is it to notice in the two Epistles of Peter—in the first Epistle which he wrote to the Gentiles, to whom the Gospel had been preached by Pauline messengers; and in his second Epistle he speaks of “the Epistles of the beloved brother Paul, who wrote according to the wisdom which was given to him”; he puts his epistles on an equality with the other Scriptures. No; not for a single moment must the thought be admitted that there had been any divergence between the Twelve and the Apostle Paul. Yet was his mission special. Not like the others had he been a companion of Jesus in the days of His flesh; no witness was he of what Jesus taught and did and suffered when He was here upon earth. His first knowledge of Jesus was when he beheld Him as the Lord from heaven, as the exalted Son of God, who from the throne of the Divine Majesty came down to him and revealed Himself to his soul. And therefore is it that in all the teaching of the Apostle Paul his testimony is not to supplement that of the four Evangelists, but it is the testimony that Jesus is the Lord of all—the Son of God. The death and the exaltation of Jesus are the two points which he continually brings before us, and that we who now believe in the Lord Jesus Christ are united with One who is in heaven—God and man; and that knowing that He had been

offered up for our offences, and that He lives now as our Royal High Priest, we are identified with Him, putting our trust in His power and His love.

And as the testimony of Paul starts with Christ as exalted Lord, so the testimony of Paul is, *from that very reason, a world-wide one.* Not gradually did he see how the circle of believers was to be enlarged, and how, after Judea, there was to be Galilee, and after Galilee there was to be Samaria, and then there were to be those who were proselytes, and after that, in some mysterious way not clearly understood, through Israel the salvation of God was to come to other nations. His starting-point was given at once, not from Jerusalem, but from heaven; and with that exalted Saviour from heaven did he look down upon the whole world and say, "Is He the God of the Jews only? Is He not also the God of the Gentiles?" From the very outset Christ told him that he was sent to the Gentiles, and unto kings, and unto the people of Israel. This accounts for the tone with which Paul speaks of himself as an apostle to bring to obedience of the truth all the nations of the world.

Third peculiarity. The *contrast between law and gospel* was never so realised and experienced as it was by Saul of Tarsus, who was a Hebrew of the Hebrews, of the strictest sect of the Pharisees, according to the law blameless, and who, when Jesus appeared unto him, saw that that in which he trusted was by no means a foundation upon which he could build. So was it that, with greater intensity of experience, he from the very outset declared that not by the works of the law, but apart from the law, through grace, and by that righteousness of God which is in Christ Jesus, both Jews and Gentiles were to be saved.

And these peculiarities of his apostolate which were

born within him along with his conversion, we see in all his epistles. We speak about the "conversion" of the Apostle Paul which is narrated three times in the Book of Acts, but this is a very one-sided and defective expression. He who appeared to him to convert thereby, also gave unto Him the apostolate ; at the same moment that he was born a Christian was he born an apostle ; and therefore is it that in no apostolate is the individuality of the man so continuously conspicuous as in that of the Apostle Paul. Christ appeared to him to make him a Christian *and an apostle*. This also I must add, that from the outset Jesus said, "I will show him what he shall have to suffer for My sake." It was to be a *testimony of suffering and of agony, of continued self-denial, of trials, of persecutions, and of inward struggles and conflicts, such as the world had never seen before.*

This is the man who has given us the epistles.

What think ye of the Epistles of the Apostle Paul ? Weighty are they and full of wisdom, loving are they and full of tears. Their bulk, their size is insignificant, but many a bulky book is but a pamphlet, and many a short letter, as some of the Apostle Paul's, are graven, as it were, on a rock, and will stand and live for ever ; for it is not the words, but the thoughts ; it is not the thoughts, but the experience which produced the thoughts. In all the Epistles of the Apostle Paul we have the man himself. Short is the expression ; in a few moments is it read ; but many days and many nights and many years of inward prayer and agony, and of constant meditation and self-application were required before the word was coined, and before the mighty and powerful sentences came out of the depths of the soul. This is the wonderful thing in the Epistles of Paul : *himself* we possess in his Epistles. If

there is any human being in the world whom you know better than the Apostle Paul you have not read properly the Epistles of Paul. If we have read the Epistles of Paul with attention, with diligence, and with thoughtfulness, there is no human being with whom we are so familiarly acquainted as this chosen vessel of the Lord. Two saints of God there are of whom it is given to us to see not merely their outward actions, or to become acquainted with the words which they have uttered, but to look into their very hearts and to see the deepest springs and motives of their existence—that is, King David, as he is revealed in the Psalms, and the Apostle Paul as he is revealed in the Epistles. And *why is he revealed in his Epistles?* Why ought we to know the Apostle Paul so intimately? For this reason; that just as his conversion is a pattern from which all future ages are to learn what is meant by conversion, so is the Apostle Paul a pattern of what is meant by a Christian and a disciple of the Lord Jesus. No other man was able to say as he was able to say, “Be ye followers of me as I am of Christ.”

In the Epistle of Peter we have also reminiscences of Peter's life and experience. To understand the Epistles of Peter two facts are very helpful—to remember first how Christ by the Transfiguration, and afterwards by His sufferings and resurrection taught the apostles that through sufferings He was to enter into glory; and therefore all the Epistles of Peter are full of that one idea—that we must suffer with Christ to enter afterwards into His glory. And we must remember, secondly, how Peter, trusting in his own strength, became a prey of that roaring lion that goeth about to devour us, but was delivered by the power and the compassion of Jesus Christ. But while these facts throw light upon the Epistles of Peter, it cannot be said

of the epistles of Peter, or indeed of the pistles of any of the other apostles, that they light up the writer's character and individuality, and the things that were going in his heart. But of the letters of the Apostle Paul it must be said, and is evident in all, that in them we behold the Apostle Paul. No human being is so translucent and so transparent as is this man as he utters himself in the letters that he sends to his congregations and to his friends.

Do you know the Epistles of Paul? Do you know each epistle so that at once you recognise it? Can you distinguish one epistle from another? It happens to the young Christian with regard to the Epistles of Paul, that he feels like a man who comes into a numerous family. There are many brothers and many sisters. He sees a family resemblance in feature, in voice, in walk, in thought, in them all. He thinks at the first visit and second visit, "I shall never know each of them separately and remember their names." But, if he becomes acquainted with them, and cultivates friendship with them, he will soon see that each one has an individuality of his own, and they will exist in his mind and in his affections distinct and well defined. And is it not so with the Epistles of Paul? Do you not know the Epistle to the Romans? Jehovah Tsidkenu, "The just shall live by faith"; the world-wide epistle that explains the position of Jews and Gentiles, and explains also the mystery of Israel and their ultimate conversion? Do you not know the Epistle to the Galatians, which shows us that between Christ and the soul the law can never come, but that the adoption comes by Christ, and that the Holy Ghost comes from Christ? Do you not know the Epistle to the Ephesians? The Church in Christ chosen, redeemed, accepted, enthroned in heavenly places, and yet having the Spirit to walk here upon earth worthy



of the heavenly calling. Do you not know the Epistle to the Colossians? Christ is the first-born of every creature, above all angels and principalities, in whom we are complete. Let no man therefore say to us, "Touch not, taste not, handle not," for "we seek the things that are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God." Do you not know the Epistle to the Hebrews, where the Apostle shows the exceeding glory of the new covenant, because we have a great High Priest in heaven where our worship is now? Who can forget the Epistles to the Thessalonians, waiting for the Lord from heaven; or those marvellous Epistles to the Corinthians in which we see the manifold sorrows and trials of a minister of Christ, and in which we behold that Christ crucified is not merely the theme of our preaching but the very method of our existence. You know the pastoral Epistles in which we see the heart of the Apostle to Timothy, his dearly beloved son, and to Titus; and that short but exquisitely sweet Epistle to Philemon in which we see what a Christian is expected to do—to be obedient and humble towards those that are above him—to be forgiving and generous to those that are beneath him. Each Epistle of the Apostle stands out with a character and distinctness of its own. The manifold wisdom of God wrought this great channel to visit and refresh the Church of Christ.

And now let me speak for a few moments on that epistle of which I have given no characteristic, the sweetest epistle of all—the one that may be compared to a cloudless sky, to a peaceful lake, to a fragrant garden—that epistle addressed to "the saints at Philippi, with bishops and deacons." Let me remind you to-day only of one point; of *the origin of the Church at Philippi*. The history which we have read in that most graphic chapter

of the Book of Acts is full of importance. I shall try to bring before you the leading features. The second missionary journey of the Apostle Paul was commenced in companionship with Silas, whom he preferred to Mark, because he saw in him a more thorough devotedness to the cause of Christ, and who was sanctioned by the whole Church of Christ at that place to go with him. But in the region in which he was in Asia Minor, he felt that there was no door open to him, or that there was no permission granted to him to labour in the Gospel. Sometimes the Apostle felt that his purpose was hindered by Satan—"Satan hindered us to come unto you." But in this instance he was sure that it was the Holy Ghost himself who would not allow him to go into those parts; and feeling the direction of the Holy Ghost, he went on until he came to Troas. There the sea was before him—the sea, itself an image of the nations of the world. And now the thought must have entered into his mind, "The time has come when I am to go right away into the world of nations where the influence of Israel has been scarcely perceptible, and when the real mission that was entrusted to me, to go far away from the people to those that have never heard of God and of His truth, is to commence in earnest." He was not alone there, because Luke was with him. It is evident that he joined him at Troas, and this is one reason why that sixteenth chapter is so full of vividness, for Luke was an eye-witness of those events which are recorded there. Silas was his companion, but there was with him also a third equally remarkable man, and that was young Timothy—the son of a Hebrew woman and of a Greek father. Timothy was one whose mother and grandmother had been believers and worshippers. From his earliest child-

hood he was taught the Holy Scriptures, and through the Apostle Paul he was brought into the full knowledge of God in Christ Jesus. At that tender age he already impressed the Apostle as one who would be his fellow labourer. Fragile, as far as his bodily constitution was concerned, as afterwards we read that he was in frequent infirmities, tender-hearted and sensitive—"When I call to mind thy tears," this young and ardent soul, with that gratitude and intense affection which young Christians feel when an older and more experienced disciple recognizes the fire that burns within their heart, gave himself over to the Apostle Paul, and became his companion and consolation, his stay and his help.

So, then, these four—Paul, Silas, Luke, the beloved physician, and Timothy sailed across the Ægean Sea, and arrived at Macedonia. But what decided the Apostle Paul was the vision which he had in the night—not a dream : he was not asleep, he was awake. There stood before him a Macedonian man. Even as we know that after his conversion the Apostle Paul had a vision, and saw Ananias coming to him, and touching his eyes and restoring his eyesight, so again God sent to the Apostle Paul a vision which he beheld evidently. A man from Macedonia called upon him to come over and help them, for, without help from above, the Gentiles never can come to the knowledge of God. No human speculation can arrive at the knowledge of God and of His attributes; no human endeavour, no penitence, no search, can find out the way of atonement. Help is needed—help sent by God through Israel — help sent by God through the Apostles and through the written Word. "Help us!" This was a voice that entered into his soul, and he obeyed it.

When he arrived at Philippi, which was the connecting

link between Asia and Europe, and in which both the Greek element and the Roman element were represented, the first thing that he did was to inquire whether there were any Jews to whom to preach the Gospel, for not even now, as to the very end of his existence, would he forget, To the Jew first, and then to the Gentiles. So, as there was no synagogue in Philippi as there was in Berea and in Thessalonica, he went to the river side, where a few women were assembled together for prayer. There he preached the Gospel, and there happened that which seems exceedingly simple—but it was the beginning of the Gospel in Europe. There was Lydia, a seller of purple of Thyatira—very likely a proselyte from the Gentiles—one that was engaged in trade—one that was living in a city where there was scarcely any one who shared her religious convictions, but one who was faithful in all that which was committed to her, and continued diligently in the worship of God. She listened to the glad tidings which the Apostle Paul explained to her, and, as she listened, a marvellous thing happened. Gentle it was, and she was scarcely conscious of it. Her heart was opened. God Himself touched the heart. But let no one infer from this that, because God touched the heart of Lydia, therefore in listening to the Gospel we are to be apathetic, and to wait until the supernatural influence is exerted. It was *the heart* that God opened—not a dead door nor inert matter—but a heart which is able to think, and to listen, and to wish, and to will, and to pray, and to decide; and thus it was that God did all, and Lydia did all; and she gave herself to the Lord, and was baptized.

No sooner had this woman come to the knowledge of Christ, than the thought immediately arose in her mind

that what was so precious to her must come also to others ; and she constrained Paul and Silas to remain with her. Here was a commencement most characteristic for the development of the Gospel in Europe. A woman is the first European Christian, for in Christ Jesus there is neither male nor female. "Salute the women," says the Apostle Paul, "who have laboured with me in the Gospel." And everywhere we read in the Epistles that not only were women brought to the knowledge of Christ, but they were most active and energetic in the ministry of the Word, and in spreading the tidings of the Gospel.

But the second incident is equally characteristic. As the Apostles were walking through the streets of Philippi, they were continually met by a girl who was a slave, and who was possessed by the spirit of Pytho. As you know, among the Romans and the Greeks, slaves were not merely those who performed menial labour, but among the slaves there were poets, and grammarians, and physicians, and men and women who had manifold endowments and qualifications, and who were valued accordingly ; and so this girl who was a slave—"a live chattel"—was possessed of that mysterious spirit of divination of which we read in antiquity.

Now this was no mere superstition or fancy, but it was a real spirit that spoke out of her ; and if it had not been a real spirit, Paul would have exhorted her masters not to be superstitious, but he would never have addressed the spirit, and commanded him to come out of her. There are demons and there are spirits ; but for us it is not necessary to enter at all into this disquisition. One thing we know, that we must have nothing to do with them, and that all spiritualism, whatever shape or form it may



assume, is to the Christian perfectly hateful and abominable, and that no man can be in communion with Christ, and at the same time be in communion with spirits. The words of this spirit seemed not to be evil. He commended the Apostles. He bore testimony that they were declaring the way of God and the salvation of God ; and if he had succeeded to flatter the Apostle Paul, and to induce the Apostle Paul to look upon him as an ally, the work of God in Philippi would have been corrupted and destroyed for evermore. But the spirit of Paul, or rather the spirit of Jesus, would not allow it, and he conquered him in the name of the Lord.

Second peculiarity of this Philippi. *In Christ Jesus there is neither bond nor free*, even as there is neither male nor female ; and the spirit of Christ will deliver us from Satan and all his lying miracles, and wonders, and science,—falsely so called,—and God-opposed philosophy, even to the end of the world.

Third peculiarity. *An uproar arose*. The opposition of the city was roused, and why ? The Greeks and the Romans were exceedingly tolerant in the matter of religion. They were willing to add any new deity to that number which they worshipped in their temples, or to accept any new religious speculation or custom. *There is only one religion against which the world is intolerant, and that is Christ's*. There is no difference between the nineteenth century and the first ; none whatever. People are tolerant of every religion, but not of Christ's religion, and therein they are perfectly right, because Christ's religion is most intolerant, and will not allow any other religion beside it, for "there is only one God, and Him only shalt thou worship" ; and "there is only one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus." So we have here the type of what

will happen in Europe among the most civilized nations. They will hate Christianity.

Fourth peculiarity. So deep and violent was this hatred that, against all the usual justice and equity of the Roman law, *the Apostles were shamefully entreated*. They were beaten with rods. The Apostle never forgets the sufferings which he endured there. He enumerates them among the many other sufferings through which he had come. And then they were cast into the prison, and in the prison their feet were made fast in the stocks, and, while thus their whole body must have been racked with excruciating pain from the head to the soles of their feet, and ignominy and reproach had been heaped upon them, yet Paul and Silas felt that the Word of God was not bound, and that they were the teachers of Europe and ambassadors of the King of kings. They prayed unto God, and, as they prayed, God, who is able to do all things, but who is especially able to make Himself felt in the hearts of His people, poured into their souls such a flood of light and of joy that prayer was changed into praise, and the voice of supplication into the melody of song ; and in the words of the dear old Psalms of David, they lifted up their hearts to God, "who looseth the prisoners, and who will break all the fetters in which His people sigh, and who will give victory unto His Word, and show His salvation unto the ends of the earth." *By martyrdom—by rejoicing martyrdom—was the Gospel planted and established in Europe*. And by martyrdom, and rejoicing martyrdom, in the latter days, will the testimony of Jesus be again brought before the Gentiles.

Then in the prison-chamber of Philippi there happened that wonderful conversion of the jailer. The earthquake prepared it, but the thing that was the incorruptible seed and the most powerful sword of the Spirit was that simple

message of the Apostle Paul, without which there would have been no Christianity in Europe,—without which there is no Christianity,—“Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.” For Christianity does not consist in morality; Christianity does not consist in good works; Christianity does not consist in a higher elevation of mind and character; Christianity is nothing else but a poor lost sinner taking hold of Him who shed His precious blood on the cross, and trusting in Him, receiving the assurance of forgiveness, remission, and absolution of his sins and the gift of life everlasting. This is the very life-blood of the life, and this is the very nerve of the testimony of the Apostles in Philippi.

Behold this jailer and his household, believing and rejoicing in Christ: with water they are baptized, and they washed the wounds of the Apostles, for faith was already beginning to show itself in love; and as the elect of God he, the hard-hearted and cruel Roman, put on bowels of compassion and tender mercies.

Another peculiarity which we have here is this. *Lydia and her household, the jailer and his household.* The question whether there were infants in these households is altogether a secondary and insignificant one. The important point is this—that *the Apostles specially brought the Gospel to the heads of families, for the whole family.*

The Apostle Paul felt convinced that if this jailer gave his heart to Jesus in faith, God would not merely bless him, but also his wife and his children, and that both he and all that were his would be the Lord's. That was the origin of the Church at Philippi.

Here I must pause. I have brought before you to-day, first, the characteristics of the Epistles in the New Testament—that in them the Apostles are your Apostles, your

teachers, and your pastors,—a voice speaking to you, an experience communicated to you in the fulness of conviction, wishing for a response, that you also may have fellowship with them whose fellowship is with the Father and with the Son. I have brought before you the special characteristics of the Epistles of Paul, and I beseech you to read them,—to read them diligently, to read them connectedly,—to read them repeatedly, and to read Epistle after Epistle by itself, concentrating your attention upon it, and meditating and ruminating in your hearts until it stands out before you as a well-known and beloved friend.

And I have, lastly, brought before you the wonderful planting of the Church at Philippi, of which this is the Alpha and the Omega, the foundation and the cope-stone. “Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.”

Oh, that there may be no one here who has become so dead through constant hearing of the Gospel without accepting it; who, with all his sermon hearing and all the instructions which he has allowed to be heaped up in his memory, without entering into his conscience and heart, does not yet stand on the level with the jailer of Philippi; who, after twelve o'clock, became a new creature in Christ Jesus, and knew the faithful saying, worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners”: not to teach them, not to mend them, not to help them, but “to save sinners, of whom I am chief.” Amen.

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### *III. Sermon to Children.*

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#### THE LORD'S PRAYER.

BY REV. J. OSWALD DYKES, D.D.\*

LUKE XI. c. 1-5 v.

WHAT I particularly want you to look at this morning in this prayer, the Lord's own, is that we are to say it in the spirit, and not only in the words. In the first place, I want you to notice that these words of the Lord's own prayer are the prayer, the request of a Son of God. They are the request of a Son of God! It is as sons, as children, that we are to obey Jesus and utter this prayer, and to go and ask God for anything. "Our Father," we are to say at the first word, with confidence, with affection, with a feeling that He loves us, with a feeling that we may be very frank with Him, and He will not be angry with us; that when we want anything badly, and we make up our mind it is a thing worth asking for, then we can expect to be listened to. You know whether it will be granted or not. It will be considered by your Father, and He will grant it if it be right. And as we go to our Father in this spirit, so ought we to go to God. How can we? I will tell you. If we go in company with Christ; if we go thinking of what He has told us of our Father in Heaven; if we go asking God to grant us for Jesus Christ's sake—then we can say "*Our* Father." And not alone. It is Jesus who is with us so that we say "*Our* Father." It is in Jesus' name that we come. I wonder whether this

\* Regent Square Presbyterian Church, London. Sunday Morning, March 23rd, 1884.



word "our" at the beginning has anything to do with this or not. When you say at the side of your little bed "*Our* Father," is not Jesus there beside you? Is not Jesus praying with you? Oh, yes; you are never alone in prayer; you have always one companion in prayer, and this is the blessed Jesus who prayed for us, and prays with us, and who taught us to pray.

"Teach us to pray," they said; and He taught them. He took them aside and made them lift up their hands with His, and say, "Our Father"; and remember when you pray and say, "Our Father," Jesus is beside you. He is your Father for Jesus' sake.

Next you will notice that if we pray as Jesus would have us to do, we come to God as sons who care more for the Father's interests than for our own.

Selfish praying—there is, dear children, a great deal of selfish praying—consists in simply asking God for something for ourselves. Jesus' prayers are not selfish. He does not say first, "Forgive my sin"; He says first, "Hallowed be Thy name." May Thy name be kept holy by all. "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done." Three different times He prays that the Father's wishes may be accomplished, and the Father's name honoured before He even begins to speak about His own affairs, till He teaches us to speak about them. If we would therefore pray aright, we must ask first for those things for which Jesus asked. Jesus tells us to choose the good part, that all men may become holy and good. When we come to God we should like all men to love Him and honour Him. This is the second thing I learn from this prayer.

In the third place, if we pray as Jesus would have us to do, it must be with the most entire submission in our hearts to the will of God. We have not to say "Give me

this or that," whether it be good or not ; but to say that whatever we wish to happen may seem good in the sight of God. We are to say, " Let this thing be, only if it be good for me," asking nothing against God's will. Then our prayers are the right prayers.

Lastly, if we come to God as His sons, to pray aright, we must come feeling that we depend upon His goodness for everything ; that in Him is gathered up all we need in this world and the next—all we need for our bodies, and all we need for our souls. And Jesus does not say, " Come once and ask for all." He does not say ask once, but when we pray we are to ask for our daily bread. That is to say, always asking, not for to-morrow's bread, or next year's, but just what I want now. No more. Forgive me my sin—the sin I have committed now. Forgive me now. I want you to see that it is continual dependence upon God. It is daily asking for necessities—no more. There is no encouragement to ask for more than is absolutely necessary for this life. Ask for daily bread, every day, and you will get it. Ask for to-morrow's bread, and you will not get it. Ask for forgiveness every day, and ask daily not to be led into temptation. Keep on, always depending, always asking in the spirit of a little child who feels its needs just now,—to-day,—who wants to-day what it needed yesterday ; and with no store and no goodness of its own.

I think this is the spirit of the Lord's own prayer. I think, boys and girls, you can pray so. And let your daily prayers be the sign of your submission and trust and love to your dear Father, of whom your Saviour Jesus hath told you. Amen.

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*IV. Outline Sermons.*

## THE EPIPHANY.

BY THE REV. HENRY WACE, D.D.\*

“How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery (as I wrote afore in few words. Whereby when ye read ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ).”—EPHES. iii. 3, 4.

THE Feast of the Epiphany, which we celebrate to-day, has been from the earliest times one of the festivals of the Church. It was observed as part of the Christmas festival, and the Armenian Christians always kept their Christmas on the 6th of January, instead of on December 25th. The Greek Church named it not only the theophany, but the Theophany, and both names were used at the same time by St. Jerome. About the fourth century the Greek Church began to direct attention to it more particularly in connection with the appearance of Christ to the Gentiles, and St. Ambrose was among the first to give to this day this special commemoration, and St. Augustine confirmed it, as in that day the appearance of Christ to the Gentiles was considered worthy to rank side by side with even such a day as Christmas. Something, we may perhaps be allowed to think, of the practical and historical insight of the Western Church has tended to this result. It is a turning point in the history of the Church and the world, and as such has been singled out for special commemoration. We may derive a singular confirmation of our own faith if we consider the event in the light of the Epistle for this morning. If you recall the conditions under which this Epistle was written, you will perceive that it is one of the most important of the inspired utterances to be found in the Scriptures.

\* Preached in Lincoln's Inn Chapel, January 6th, 1884.

It is to us a commonplace that Christ appeared to the Gentiles ; but vastly different did it appear to the readers at the time St. Paul wrote, whether Gentiles or Jews. There existed the deepest separation, and not only so, but antagonism between the Jews and other races. Though throughout the Roman Empire they were spread, they were nevertheless a people within a people, a world within a world. It is not too much to say that the Jew and the Gentile constituted two different worlds. The Jew had his own customs and laws, and existed less for the present than for the future,—for the time foretold by the prophets, when the everlasting kingdom of the Son of David was to be set up on earth. He made no secret of his contempt for the world by which he was surrounded, and it was but natural that this feeling should be reciprocated by the Gentiles. The Jew was the member of a race which was but tolerated and used, though regarded almost as an enemy to the human race. There was thus on both sides an insuperable sense of antagonism. They dwelt apart, and each expected, if not desired, the overthrow or extermination of the other.

Now the Apostle who penned the passage before us was a representative member of this Jewish race, and was of the tribe of Benjamin. To us he is above all a Christian, and we may not be able to realise the Apostle in the other capacity. Paul did not for one moment cease to be a Jew because he became a follower of Christ ; on the contrary, he became more heartily and sincerely a Jew than before ; because, unlike the majority of his people, he was a Jew full of hope and assurance. Tenaciously as the Jews clung to their prophecies, the sense of their not being fulfilled was full of sorrow and disappointment. But St. Paul was the reverse. He discerned that the promise made to his nation had at last been fulfilled, that the Messiah for whom His people had been yearning throughout their long history had come, and that the moment of their greatest glory had arisen. To him the words of the prophet Isaiah read this

morning were, in fact,—“Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentile shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.” His spiritual eyes discerned in our Lord the Saviour of his people. His soul is filled, therefore, not with the faith of a Christian, but with the faith of a Christian Jew, and he speaks throughout the Epistles as such. In the Epistle before us he seems to address them almost in the old sense of superiority—“Wherefore remember that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called Circumcision in the flesh made by hands. That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel” [the very description the Jews would have given to the Gentiles], “and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: but now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For He is our Peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us.”

Such, my brethren, was the position of the Apostle, and from this point of view it is that he utters the predictions of the text. He is a prisoner at Rome, regarded by Romans as simply a leader of the new sect of Jews, promising to be more troublesome than the Jews themselves. He has impressed upon him the antagonism between the two peoples. He knew the two worlds thoroughly, and can consequently appreciate that antagonism. A Gentile Christian who had not been to live among the Jews could have failed to appreciate the intense antagonism of the Jews. But St. Paul could have no such misconception. By the Gentiles he had been persecuted as a Jew, and by the Jews he had been persecuted as a renegade. To proclaim to the Jews that the Gentiles would be one with them, and to the Gentiles that they would become



the same as the Jews—this was at that day a paradox. To proclaim it as a Divine revelation, and as constituting the greatest glory of both, must have seemed little short of madness. "Paul, much learning has made thee mad," was no unnatural exclamation.

Such, brethren, was the message of the Apostle. He declared that unto him had been revealed the mystery. By revelation he said there was made known to us the mystery "which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto His holy Apostles and Prophets by the Spirit." He seems to have unfolded before him the main and essential design which was thenceforth to be carried out by the Divine hand. He claimed not only to be a messenger of the new spiritual truth, but he did not scruple to avow that the main intentions of the Divine One had been revealed to him: "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things in Jesus Christ. To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God. According to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." The very principalities and powers of heaven are regarded by him as looking with wonder at this revelation—a result the most improbable, the most offensive in idea to all but a handful of people then living, is declared by him to be the ultimate design of God!

Let us venture to realise what we may venture to call the sublime audacity of such a prediction. It is not a hope, but a positive statement. This prediction has been realised, and so abundantly, that, as I have remarked, we fail to appreciate the incident to which it gave a prophetic character. We of the Gentiles have entered into the very spiritual inheritance

of the ancient Jewish people. The prophets and historians of the Jews are all ours. We are of the same spirit in their eyes. Our spiritual life is sustained by their words. Our essential position as Christians is that we have become as one with the ancient people of God. Our highest pride and privilege is that in Christ Jesus we are the subjects of the King of the Jews, belonging to His people, and among those whom He came to save from their sins. St. Paul has brought us to share His fellowship and glory. On the other hand, the prophet's predictions with regard to the Hebrews have been realised. "That blindness in part is happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved."

These wild promises of the Apostle, as they seemed to be at the time of their utterance, have proved to be the visions or a divinely-inspired insight. Yet the division between the two peoples afterwards for some time seemed to grow wider than it was before—"Whereby," as Paul well claims, "when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ."

In moments, brethren, when our faith may need confirmation, when difficulties—as there must needs be in a mystery like that of the Gospel—press upon us, we may fall back on this broad and unmistakable evidence of power in the writers of the New Testament. We are sometimes asked to believe only that which can be established on scientific evidence. No one who relied in Paul's time on that would have been near the truth. Paul's statements could not have been scientifically demonstrated. He appealed to the great miracle, the Resurrection of our Saviour, and worked miracles himself; but it must have been felt that he, nevertheless, made an immense demand on the faith of those he addressed. It was to the general probability of his message that he appealed, and by virtue of this it was that they were induced to devote themselves to a faith and a course of life at variance with the habits and interests of their day. And so for many

generations they lived in faith; but in this faith, that the promise of spiritual supremacy given to the Jews was to be shared by the Gentiles, and to extend to all the world.

Let the fulfilment of this faith be an encouragement to us. It should be an encouragement to us, for instance, in reference to the spread of Christianity in heathen countries at the present day. People point to the wide difference between the faith and habits of heathen nations and ourselves, and argue that these differences are too great to be overcome. Be it remembered, for the confirmation of our faith and a stimulus for our efforts, that no differences of this kind can be greater, if so great, as they appeared between the Jews and the Gentiles at the time of St. Paul. These promises which were given to Paul, instead of being out of harmony as they appeared in Paul's time, have been amply fulfilled. If there is one thing which is plain at the present time, it is the onward march of Christian civilisation. Let us be encouraged, then, to believe that the fulness of the Gentiles is yet to come; and, finally, that the noble race who are the spiritual fathers of these great miracles will at length have the veil removed from their eyes.

If these hopes are to be fulfilled, it becomes us to realise them in our own lives. The essential privilege of Christians is that we have been bought by the precious blood of Christ, and have been brought into personal communion with our Father in heaven. We are to have boldness of access to the Father. It is not by the mere influence of Christian culture that it can be firmly established; it is by us who claim to be the followers of Christ, showing in our lives the transforming and regenerating influence of our Divine Master's spirit. Let us, moreover, be encouraged in our daily lives to seek for inspired wisdom, being assured that if we thus follow the Saviour now, we shall after this life have the fruition of the glory of God.

THE POWER OF GODLINESS.

BY THE REV. WILLIAM PULSFORD, D.D.\*

“For as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God.”—John i. 12.

THE history of sin begins in the highest forms of sensuality : that is, it clothes itself in a form of Godliness whilst carrying a principle of enmity to God and religion. The subject presents two thoughts—Godliness as a power ; and Godliness as clothed with the corresponding form.

The power then of Godliness—we would naturally suppose that it would be a power—or Godlikeness, can only be ours so far as the law of God takes possession of the soul, and that is what Godliness is. This is what we are allowed to infer from the words of my text, “For as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God.” “If any man be in Christ and God, he is a new creature,” and it is called “the power of God unto salvation.” Of so much use is this gift that, in opposition to mere form, we are told that in Christ Jesus we become “new creatures.” No less does this make itself manifest as to the power of Godliness, if you look at the aspect of the history of revealed will : the history of Christianity as the history of the most marvellous power the world has ever seen. At the very first a true light took up its abode, not in the ignorant places of the earth, not among what were and now are termed heathens ; but it found its home in the very centre of the world’s law ; in the world’s knowledge ; in its seats of literature and civilisation. Religion, then, in the history of the world, presents to us the most marvellous power the world has ever seen. All men, who have to do with the governments of the world, know they dare not trifle with religious thought and religious feeling too far. These men ask how far they can go and no farther ; and this history of the power of Godliness is but in accordance with the

\* Trinity Congregational Church, Glasgow, Nov. 5th, 1882.

very nature of Godliness ; for it is the most natural power, absolutely relative to all men's nature ; perfectly consonant with his mind, his heart, his conscience. It has, too, all the properties of a natural power, and is to the soul what light and gravitation are to physical things.

The action, too, corresponds with the actions of all natural forms ; it blesses those things that possess it ; it sends its blessings to those around. Then it is the highest natural power, because it is infinite and eternal. The relation of the finite to the infinite, and particularly to the things, not only of a world which is out of sight, but to The Great Invisible, by whom all things are and were created. It is a power, therefore, which is naturally of the highest nature of God, and intensely natural to the deepest nature of the mind,—the power of intelligence. It appeals to thought ; it desires a home in the affections ; it claims to exercise the influential motives ; for it is the power of love, of light, of liberty. Nothing in comparison has ever given the world those three powers of love, of light, of liberty. Then it is not only this highest power, but the highest power in its intellect, its might in the effort to re-engage the estranged affections of man, call back his rebellious will to obedience : the highest power in the sphere of which the imperative is forbidden, and the persuasive held. And then, too, its scope and its possibilities requires it to be a power ; for it comes to deliver ; it comes to redeem ; it comes to take man from under the curse ; it comes to break down the bondage of sin, and restore to liberty and light. If you call to mind its characteristic elements, they are all elements of a power. It is the power of repentance, and can lead a man to repent ; to change his thoughts ; to change his affections : a power of the highest form and quality. Then it is the power of faith, that which leads beyond the visible, and makes all visible things only to imitate the invisible ; to be the pathway by which we rise and go beyond them, and claim our relations to a world supremely out of sight. So of love, so of liberty ;



these are its characteristic features, all of them elements of the highest power. But every vital power seeks to express itself, and clothe itself in form. Therefore Godliness is not only a thing of power, but it has also a corresponding form. All faith seeks expression in freedom, or there is no vital freedom; there is a movement to maintain an expression; and the expression is that which seeks to clothe that faith with a form corresponding to itself. And as you rise from the lowest forms of life upward, that same instinct of expression rises. And as the lower forms of vitality clothe themselves in simple forms; as you rise higher the form becomes more complex, but always endeavouring to express itself. When you rise to your own nature, how marvellous is the instinct of expression. Take, for instance, the unconscious instinct of human vitality, which seeks to and does express itself in every human countenance unmistakably, making every man's individuality, however numerous they may be, true to themselves; there is the conscious endeavours and wish for expression, to clothe ourselves, to accord our inmost thought and feelings. The very history of language is but the history of the endeavours to make itself known, to clothe itself in adequate forms. And as we are thus distinctly individual, so the form must be individual also; it seems to stereotype the form. Man may endeavour, and man does endeavour, to make one form of all the forms of faith. The history of creeds is but the history of the endeavour to stereotype forms of thought and feeling.

Let every man who knows his own vitality, how that he, when he is true to himself, must give his own tone, his own colour, to the expression of his own inmost relations to the Great Supreme and Invisible; the very instinct of spiritual love demands freedom, and our vitality, when it is true and deep, resents the very idea of being bound by the expressions of another as expressing our individual interpretation of the relations we sustain to the Absolutely Supreme.

Sometimes these forms of Godliness and religion hide the

Spirit's power ; but at other times the spirit-power spiritualizes the form. So in the history of religion, if you compare the Old Testament with the New, then the one has a greater comprehensiveness of form in comparison with the other ; for in the New the form almost vanishes away. Not a form predominates in the New ; the spirit prevails. So that we have literally in the New Testament little of prescribed outward form. Baptism of the Spirit seemed to be all ; and in respect to this the great liberty prevails. How many among the best and highest of men, who are all in all, and whose lives are memorials in Christian literature, have been under opposite poles in regard to the forms of religion ! Take the Society of Friends, who seem to deprecate all form as much as possible ; to place themselves so as to realise the freedom and inspiration of the Spirit in every action of the power. To travel down from those to the follies of form prevailing in the Salvation Army, and you have two opposite poles.

As is the love, so is the power ; and as is the stage of its history, so will it clothe itself with its becoming form, and with its height ; as we may always turn for illustration to things highest and most perfect in Godliness and religion to Jesus our Master Lord. How free, how simple, how spiritual, the forms which clothe all His thoughts and feeling, and love from day to day !

Religion and Godliness as a power, and Godliness with its corresponding form. But the words of a text speak of those who have a form of Godliness, but deny the power. Now, it is only with great difficulty and great danger that you can ever deny the power its becoming expression. All love seeks expression ; and the strongest love that is in you, depends upon it, expresses itself every day. The wife knows the love, the children know the love that prevaieth by your daily expression ; your comrades by your daily conversation and behaviour. Depend upon it, if there is a love in you, and not altogether silent, that no one knows anything about it, it is

very weak and feeble, and apt to die. But whilst it is very difficult and dangerous to express the power of Godliness from its becoming form, it is very easy to put on the form where there is no power. It is very easy to put anybody's clothes on; not so easy to receive their spirit. And to what a great extent does it prevail, we may ask—the form of Godliness, the sanctity and outward appearance, the Pharisaical observance, the scrupulousness with respect to form, and no corresponding power? Far easier and quicker to paint a rose than it is to grow one; far easier to put on the good traits of a Godly man than it is to conquer our own appetites. In love, therefore, this separation is most unnatural, and is unconscious of the love. It becomes monstrous that a man should be thought for a moment to be Godly in his dress and outward form, whilst he denies the power of Godliness in his heart.

There was a time in the history of Christianity when the mere outward form exposed a man to persecution, for they that would live Godly easily assumed the power of Godliness, and had to suffer persecution. But now the prevailing habit has become that the very form is respected and respectable; that it becomes a positive temptation to many a man who is wholly wordly throughout the whole range of his nature, to find out after long world practice that it is very profitable to wear a religious form. It is difficult, I say, to separate the form from the power, where the power is; but is very easy where the power is to clothe ourselves with the form. But, if it is easy, it is solemnly injurious. What must it be to God to clothe ourselves in a form of Godliness whilst He who looks at the heart knows that we deny the power? Is it not a soul-ruining delusion? While a man leaves his soul untouched, his guilt unburdened, and decently clothes himself in the forms which seem to express the habits which alone would justify the guilt being blotted out, and the sins repented of, does it not seem the most deceitful of all? It tells us that we may be sinners all the week, if we are only saints on

Sunday. We may do what we like in business, if we only do so under the guise of religion; we may love the world, whilst we carry the appearance of the love of God—the paying an external homage to religion, while sapping the very foundations of it. And oh! last of all, and not least, it leads to the hour all too late to make the discovery. But not only does a man deceive others, he deceives himself. Christ teaches us this: “Lord, Lord, I prophesied in Thy name; in Thy name I cast out devils; in Thy name I have done wondrous things”; but the only answer is, “I know ye not.”

Now, brethren, what is our spirit? where are we? Do we claim for ourselves the power of religion? Does the power clothe itself with a becoming expression? If we are children in Godliness, is the form a form of child-godliness? If we are, it is indeed matter for thankfulness. There is nothing more dangerous to ourselves than to anticipate the progress of religious power by easy forms, by expressions in advance of our religious state and life. Only let us be true. Let us be simple as before God—as is His power, His light, His love and liberty; let us be so that in the becoming expression we may allow our own love to make itself known. He, who has loved us and redeemed us, has called us to liberty; and, if we are only simple and true to Him, He will give us courage to make manifest that power, and such a manifestation will always be mighty with respect to all those with whom we have to do.

Just one word with respect to this power: how we are to have it, and, if having it, how is it to be employed? Christ when He was about to leave the world (those who had been about Him had learned much from His lips, from His manner, from His bearing, from the spirit of His life, from His example itself; but not yet were they fully opened up to the recognition of His power); as He was about to conclude His history, and pass away from their sight, bade His disciples return to Jerusalem, and to tarry together in the upper chamber of

sacred association, surrounded with all that should offer aid to their reflection from His whole completed history. "Tarry till ye be endowed with power from on high." Let us bear to be alone; let us in solitude calmly question ourselves; let us bring over us all the influences of His history and Christian associations, and our up-bringing; let us bring all the best of reflection and all the associations healthful; let us present all these in prayer to Him;—the prayer of a soul waiting for, and desirous for, the highest power, and we will receive power from on high.

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## *V. Church Life in Britain.*

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### NO. II.—CHURCH LIFE IN BRISTOL.

PHILANTHROPIC and religious life in Bristol is stirred by continuous excitement, rather than sustained by inherent enthusiasm. Its moods are ephemeral. Its energies are spasmodic. Movements spring into maturity at a bound, without gradation, and ripen into completeness immediately after blossoming. All new projects are hailed with readiness, reach their climax swiftly, and are forthwith abandoned. Evanescent, short-lived schemes are as common here as sunny skies and warm breezes. This western city is a favourite resort with all "off-the-line" emissaries, and is scarcely ever free of some fresh excitation: Church Missions, Moody and Sankey meetings, Gospel Temperance demonstrations, Salvation Army revelries; as well as such vagaries as "Anglo-Israelism," and the "Forty Coming Wonders;" and all, wise or wild, devout or sensational, win a vast following, mount into rapid acceptance, and then fade into forgetfulness.

The religious thermometer of Bristol life stands high.



There is warmth in the ecclesiastical atmosphere; it is the city of churches, the paradise of preachers. There is a thrill of real earnestness in its piety, a glow of ardour in the throb of its heart. In such a city it is difficult to accept the dictum of Madame de Staël, that—

“Religious life is a struggle, and not a hymn”;

for here it seems to be in full favour and fashion, and Christianity has become the polite indulgence of society, the agreeable recreation of the wealthy and industrial classes alike. So far from there being a prevalent antipathy towards religion, the public sentiment sustains and fosters it. Hence the informal religious census, taken in November, 1881, brought out the fact that Bristol ranked highest among the large cities and towns of England in the proportion of its population attending Divine worship.

It is doubtful whether there are in British Christianity great capabilities of sacred valour and spiritual hardihood; its temperament is too amiable and mild to give birth to heroes or martyrs. Perhaps it would be flattery to affirm that there is much ardent or daring attachment to religious principles. A reputable degree of sincerity there certainly is, and sufficient adherence to convictions to keep the religion of the city fair to fame. But, as contention is an unevangelical grace, and sectarianism savours of narrowness, it accords with the prevailing sentiment to eschew convictions as inconvenient, and veto denominationalism as uncharitable.

And so it comes to pass that religious vitality moves forward with only an occasional stir of party aggressiveness and sectarian zeal, the Churches preferring to nurture a good-natured though timid brotherhood, allowing all such troublesome matters as rival ecclesiastical principles and standards of Church doctrine to wait in abeyance. Bristol Church life congratulates itself on the general fraternity of the sects and the prevalent evangelicalism of its pulpits.

How indeed can the city be other than brotherly and

orthodox, toned as its thought and activity are by men so broad-hearted and truth-loving as J. M. Wilson, M. A., among Episcopalians; Richard Glover, of Tyndall Chapel, and now President of the Baptist Union; H. Arnold Thomas and Urijah R. Thomas (Independents); and Mark Guy Pearse (Wesleyan)? These are men of grace, dowered with generosity of mind, careful to nourish concord and co-operation, and animated with reverence for Truth.

No finer demonstration of Church unity has been witnessed this century than that given on the platform of the Congregational meetings in the Autumn of 1882, when there streamed into Broadmead Chapel a whole procession of clergy, well-nigh fifty strong, to declare before Christendom that unity of spirit was the keynote of Bristol Church life, and that unity of action should henceforth be further cultivated. Nor has this "Declaratory Act" fallen dead; for it was at the instance of Mr. Wilson (who addressed the Broadmead meeting so eloquently) that leading Nonconformist ministers were shortly after invited to take their fair share with the selected clergy in the honours and trust of conducting classes in the study of Scripture and Church History within the Bristol University College.

Among the dissenting bodies themselves exist almost a plethora of unions: "Fraternal" for the ministers, "United Evangelical Missions" for the Churches, and a "United Choral Association" for the sons and daughters of song.

But this unity is rather weighted with practical reservations, otherwise more aid would be given by rich Churches to poor. Yet some amount of practical help is sent from the Hill to the City Churches, if report be correct that the Rev. Armstrong Hall's evangelical work, at Trinity Church, and the Rev. J. P. Myles' ultra-ritualistic services, at St. Matthias-on-the-Weir, are considerably supported by the gold of Clifton. The Rev. J. M. Wilson, of Clifton College, quite recently enlisted the enthusiasm of his scholars and students in Church Extension

work ; and the generous givings of his young charge have gone far towards erecting a church in the poor district of Newfoundland Gardens. Moreover, it is stated that the Redland and Highbury Chapels are practically assisting two struggling Independent "causes" in the city. Perhaps also the Wesleyans and Baptists are doing a little in this right direction ; it can scarcely be other with such princely men among them, respectively, as Samuel Budget and Elisha Robinson.

In accord with its love of excitement, which characterises Bristol Church life, is its downright belief in religious demonstrations. It never lets an occasion pass for working up an imposing effect.

The comparative strength of Episcopacy and Dissent may be gathered from the Census figures of November 1881, showing 210 places of worship in Bristol, 70 of which belong to the Church of England, and 140 to Dissenters. The accommodation, however, furnished by these 70 Churches exceeds that afforded by the 140 Chapels and preaching Halls ; while the numbers at worship in the Churches considerably surpassed those at the Nonconformist meeting places. Nevertheless, with such fairly equalled strength in the two ranks of clergy and ministers, and with a nearly balanced Church accommodation and attendance, it is as natural as wise that rivalry between the Established Church and Nonconformity should yield to mutual amity and joint Christian enterprise.

Whatever may have been the glories of Bristol Churches in past times,—and men of high renown have been among its bishops, canons, preachers and pastors,—the Wesleyans venerating such names as Waddy and Punshon ; the Congregationalists keeping a warm homage for the memory of George Whitfield, William Thorp, John Leifchild, and David Thomas ; and the Baptists holding in esteem the names of John Foster and Robert Hall ;—it never had a nobler-hearted band of clergy

and ministers than it possesses to day. Bishop Ellicott is well known to the whole country. Cherished for their venerable years, reached in godly services for the churches and citizens, are such men as Dean Elliot, Canon Norris, and Dr. Doudney, among Episcopalians, to which must be added the honoured and powerful name of the Rev. George Müller, of the Christian Brethren, founder of the magnificent Ashley Down Orphanages. It would be invidious to select from their several lists, preachers of ability and worth ; but, for the influence they exert or the notice they have won, the lights of Bristol's pulpits to-day, —albeit of a strongly diverse colour—are the Revs. R. W. Randall, M.A. (All Saints' Church, Pembroke Road), Mark Guy Pearse (Trinity Chapel, Wesleyan), E. G. Gange (Broadmead Chapel, Baptist), Urijah Rees Thomas (Redland Chapel), and H. Arnold Thomas, M.A. (Highway Chapel), Congregationalists.

Beyond all doubt, the Rev. Talbot Greaves, M.A., of St. Paul's, Clifton, will ultimately make a figure in Bristol life, but whatever a man's abilities, it requires a few years here ere he can win for himself an acknowledged place among the clergy or ministers. There is not too much disposition among them to make way for a stranger, however eminent his worth and claims, everyone of them being alert to hold his own amid aspirants and rivals. In truth, the ground of public life is so overcrowded with brethren of the cloth that scarcely any path or place is left open for a new comer to occupy. He must first create his niche, and then fill it. Yet a clergyman of Talbot Greaves' force, regulated as his fervour is by a thoroughly Christian spirit, and sobered by a long career of usefulness and honour, cannot fail in the end to gain a front position and wield a recognised influence.

The High Church party has achieved great success, even in Evangelical Bristol. Among the more moderate churches, as St. John the Evangelist, Clifton (Rev. H. G. Walsh, M.A.); St. Mary the Virgin, Tyndall's Park (Rev. W. F. Bryant); St.

Barnabas, Ashley Road (Rev. E. A. Fuller, M.A.); and St. Matthias-on-the-Weir (Rev. J. Percival Myles, M.A.): more advanced are the great church of All Saints', Pembroke Road, where the Rev. R. W. Randall has laboured so devotedly; and Christ Church, Clifton Park (Rev. W. Hay Chapman).

Nonconformity may not be ritualistic, but it may be æsthetic; and at Redland Park Chapel (Rev. U. R. Thomas, minister) the form of worship is elaborate. Mr. Thomas, who succeeded his father as editor of the *Homilist*, is an able, genial, and energetic man. His congregation is intelligent and influential. The service at Highbury Congregational Chapel, near at hand, is strikingly reverent and simple. The same may be said of Tyndall Chapel (the Rev. Rev. Richard Glover's). Mr. Glover is one of the ablest preachers of the day. Nothing he has published does him justice. The Wesleyans adopt largely the Church Liturgy in their worship. Their Redland chapels are good examples of architecture; Victoria Chapel, in White Ladies' Road, being the most beautiful. This important circuit commands the best Wesleyan preachers, among those at present is the Rev. Mark Guy Pearse, well known through his writings, an unequal but at times a most powerful and impressive preacher.

With few exceptions the Churches and Chapels within the city are rapidly on the wane. For nearly 20 years there has gone forward a steady migration outwards of prosperous business people, leaving only the industrial classes to form the city congregations. The work of city ministers and pastors is thus rendered difficult and discouraging. The Rev. T. G. Harding, M.A., a man of strength and worth, is resolutely holding on at St. Peter's (Castle Street), and by his vigorous ministry is keeping his congregation together. Near by a fine old Congregational Chapel (Castle Green) is a piteous scene of desolation. Some members broke up this congregation a few years back with no more "bitter cry" as a grievance than that the minister appeared one Sabbath in the pulpit wearing



his Geneva gown. King Street Baptist Chapel is also in a decaying state. The Penn Street Tabernacle, founded by George Whitfield in 1753, once the rallying scene of wealthy Independency, and still glorified by traditions of the Wills' family and a succession of eminent preachers, is now buried amid vile lodging-houses, and hastening to its end. Ebenezer Wesleyan Chapel is also in its decrepitude; while of Old Market Street Methodist Chapel there can only be cherished a forlorn hope.

The vicar of St. James', Barton—decidedly a "Broad" man—is making his church a centre of philanthropic and beneficent energy. St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, at its side, is a chaste and attractive edifice, with a lofty spire; and the Rev. A. F. Forrest (minister) is a preacher of fair ability. Opposite stands Broadmead Baptist Chapel, of famous memory, thronged every Sunday with a magnificent congregation of some 1,700 people, charmed by the eloquence of the Rev. E. G. Gange, one of the most able and successful of the Spurgeonic school. The great prosperity of this Church involves enormous toil on the part of the pastor, who is working his life away all too fast.

Before quitting specific notices of Churches and their ministers there are a few from the vast list claiming brief notice:—

Christ Church, Freyd Park (Congregational), is far out of the city, but the Rev. J. P. Allen, M.A., who until recently was minister there, and now Principal of the Bristol Congregational College, is assuredly one of the very best men Bristol Congregationalism can boast—endowed with splendid gifts, and a thoroughly able preacher. Yet he has found his true place as a College Professor, and will there use to the full his rare capabilities.

The Rev. Comper Gray (Congregationalist), of "Biblical Museum" repute, has a chapel well situated at the end of Stokes' Croft, and he is surrounded in his ministry by an appreciative people.

City Road Baptist Chapel also stands admirably, facing the Croft. The Rev. W. J. Mayers (pastor) is gifted with a mellifluous voice, and is the "sweet singer" of Nonconformity here; he is also a genial and fairly successful minister.

The Baptist College—hideous for structure—is in the Croft, and recently a rich acquisition has been gained to its professors, and to Bristol, in the call of the Rev. J. Culross, D.D., an author of some distinction, to the Theological Chair.

The vicar of St. Barnabas, Ashley Road (Rev. E. A. Fuller), is one of the hardest-working clergymen in the city. When the great flood swept through his district about two years ago, he laid down his health, and nearly his life, in rescuing and relieving some of his parishioners from their inundated homes.

The Friends' Meeting House, situate in Rosemary Street, back of the Broad Weir, has amongst its attendants some of Bristol's most honoured and influential citizens—the Frys are members there—Lewis Fry, M.P. for Bristol, and J. T. Fry, head of the great cocoa firm. The Society is active in numberless philanthropics, and fills no unimportant place in the City's Church life. In their Burial Ground they exact uniformity as to size, design, and material of all "head-stones" to graves, in order, as they affirm, "to effectually guard against any distinction being made in that place between the rich and the poor."

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[Owing to the pressure on our space caused by the length of the opening sermons, "Brief Outlines and Suggestive Themes," and other articles, are necessarily held over.]

# I. Sermon.

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## THE MYSTERIES OF GOD.

BY REV. CANON LIDDON, D.D., D.C.L.\*

“Stewards of the mysteries of God.”—I COR. iv. 1.

THE Collect, Epistle, and Gospel for to-day, all of them refer to the ministry of the Christian Church considered as one of the agencies which is intended to prepare mankind for the second coming of Christ. St. John the Baptist in prison is the subject of the Gospel, and St. John as the forerunner of our Lord at His first coming, is the great example of those who have to prepare mankind for His second. In the Epistle St. Paul discusses the functions and the responsibilities of the apostolic ministry, while the Collect, which is addressed to our Lord Jesus Christ, combines the Gospel and the Epistle. After referring to the work of the Baptist, it chooses from St. Paul the pregnant phrase, “*Stewards of the mysteries of God,*” to describe the office of the Christian ministry: “Grant that the ministers and stewards of Thy mysteries may likewise so prepare and make ready Thy way by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just,

\* Preached in St. Paul's Cathedral on Sunday afternoon, December 14, 1884.

that at Thy second coming to judge the world we may be found an acceptable people in Thy sight." Surely a most necessary and wholesome prayer for every one of us during this present Ember week, when we Christians are supposed, after the manner of the Church of apostolic times, to be fasting and praying before hands are laid next Sunday on those who are to serve Almighty God in holy orders—a prayer which we shall use all the better if we devote this afternoon to considering the phrase of St. Paul which has such capital importance in it—" *Stewards of the mysteries of God.*"

"THE MYSTERIES OF GOD."

There can be no doubt, I apprehend, that this word "mystery" rouses a certain feeling of mental discomfort, almost amounting to suspicion and dislike, in the mind of an ordinary Englishman when he first hears it. In the ordinary use of language, too, the word has got into bad odour by the force of bad association. A mystery is frequently understood to mean something that will not bear the light—something that is wanting in the qualities of straightforwardness and explicitness; something that belongs to the region of charlatanism, intrigue, ignorance, superstition. When a crime has been committed—a theft or a murder, the author of which has not been found out—what is the phrase which rises involuntarily to our lips? "There is a dark mystery here," we say, and as we say it, the word "mystery" seems to add a new element of malignity to the crime, seems to surround it in our minds with that peculiar apprehension and dread which belongs to undiscovered evil. In this sense I observe that the placards this morning announce a "Mysterious Explosion at London Bridge" last evening, meaning, I suppose, that its origin and object are somehow obscure; and in this

sense a modern poet speaks of the murderer who on a lonely hill shall "do a deed of mystery." The word, you see, is clearly discredited by the force of association. Shakespeare, indeed, after his wont, claims for it its noblest sense when he tells

. . . "of those mysteries which heaven  
Will not have earth to know,"

but, like other words, it has lost caste in popular usage since his day. And thus, when we find the word "mystery" in the Bible and the Prayer Book, some of us almost involuntarily turn away from it; we ignore its true force; at best we treat it as belonging to a state of mind which has passed away.

It would be curious to ascertain the idea which the word "mystery" suggests to the first five men whom we meet in the street. One man would probably say, "I mean by mystery something confused and unintelligible"; and another, "Something involving a plain contradiction"; and another, "A statement which is chiefly distinguished by its defiance of reason"; and another, "Some physical or even moral impossibility"; and another, "That which is believed to be true because there is no real reason for disbelieving it." And if these, or anything like these, are the ideas which are associated by us with the word "mystery," what wonder that the word is regarded with a certain dislike and suspicion when we find it in the region of religious truth? What, then, let us ask, is the true account of this word "*mystery*"? As used in the Bible it is not to be confused with the word spelt in exactly the same way, but having quite a different sense and derivation—I mean "mystery" when it stands for a trade, a calling, or even sometimes for a miracle-play of the middle ages;



this word is originally French, or more probably Latin. The word "mystery" in the Bible is a purely Greek word, the termination only being changed. In Greece for many centuries it meant a religious or sacred secret into which, after due preparation, men were initiated by solemn rites. At Eleusis, near Athens, to give only one of the most famous examples, there were for centuries mysteries of this description, and there has been much controversy in the learned world as to their exact origin and object, the most probable account of them being that they were designed to preserve and hand on certain truths which formed part of the earliest religion of Greece, and which were lost sight of or denied, or denounced by the popular religion of a later day. A tenet thus concealed and thus disclosed was called a "mystery," because, after disclosure, it was still concealed from the general public, because it had been concealed even from the initiated up to the moment of initiation, and because, probably, it was of a character to suggest that, however much truth it might convey, there was more to which it pointed, but which still remained unknown. This was the general sense which the word had acquired at the time when the New Testament was written. Now, perhaps, it will occur to you, as it has occurred to others, to ask, "What business has a word with these Pagan antecedents to appear at all in the phraseology of the Gospel and in the pages of the New Testament?" The answer is, that the Apostles of Christ, in order to make their Divine message to the souls of men as clear as might be, took the words in common use which most nearly answered their purpose—did the best they could with them, giving them, so to speak, a new turn, inspiring them with a new and a higher significance. Thus, the word which stands for a church in the original

language of the New Testament had meant before the Athenian people in full deliberative assembly ; and the word "Liturgy," which is unhappily buried out of sight in our translation, but which is used in the New Testament of both Jewish and Christian offerings of prayer and sacrifice to God, originally meant some public service or work undertaken at his own cost by a private person for the good of the State. The Apostles found these words, as they found the word "mystery," ready to their hands in the language which they had to use ; they were guided to them by a Greek version of the Old Testament ; they, so to speak, baptized them, blessed them, and enriched them with a new and profounder meaning, which yet was not wholly inconsistent with the associations which had already belonged to them for many a century.

What, then, is the meaning of the word "*mystery*" in the New Testament ? It is used to describe not a fancy, not a contradiction, not an impossibility, but always a truth, yet a truth which has been or which is more or less hidden. Sometimes language itself, the meaning of which is hidden, is called "a mystery," as in the title on the forehead of the woman who in the Apocalypse typifies the Pagan Empire—" *Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth ;*" or, when some Corinthian Christians are said to have spoken *mysteries* in their religious assemblies, meaning language which was not understood by those who heard it ; and sometimes the word is used of the hidden drift, purpose, or meaning of institutions or tendencies, or events, as when our Lord speaks of "*the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven,*" which it was given to the Apostles to know, or St. Paul of "*the mystery of iniquity, which doth already work.*" And sometimes, again, it is applied to Christian doctrines which,

after having been hidden for long ages in the Divine mind, were at last revealed by men taught by the Spirit of God, as when St. Paul writes to the Romans of "*the preaching of Jesus Christ*" as "*the revelation of the mystery which was kept a secret since the world began, but now is made manifest among all nations for the obedience of faith,*" or to the Ephesians of the call of the Gentiles into the Church of Christ as "*the mystery, which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men as it is now revealed to the holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit,*" or to the Colossians of Christ as an inward presence in the souls of those who once were heathen as "*the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to His saints.*" And once more the word "*mystery*" is used of truth which has been revealed in outline or partially, yet of which much is still beyond human comprehension, as when St. Paul bids the Ephesians to pray that while in prison at Rome he may "*make known the mystery of the Gospel,*" that is, the Gospel which, although now revealed, is still in many respects mysterious; or when he prays that his Colossian converts may be brought to the "*knowledge of the mystery of God, or of the Father, or of Christ;*" or writes to them of "*the mystery of Christ,*" meaning the deeper truths about His person and His office; or to Timothy of "*the mystery of faith,*" which the deacons should hold "*in a pure conscience,*" meaning the hidden truths which faith receives; or of "*the mystery of godliness,*" or piety, meaning especially the Divine incarnation which a Christian piety receives without being able perfectly to comprehend it. And this sense of the word appears more clearly when St. Paul, foretelling to the Corinthians the instantaneous transformation of the mortal into an immortal body, says, "*Behold, I show you a*

*mystery; we shall not all sleep in death, but we shall all be changed;*" or when, after describing to the Ephesians that union of Christ and His Church of which marriage is a figure in the world of experience, he adds, "*This is a great mystery.*" Clearly, in each of these revealed facts there is a great deal which eludes our finite comprehension—they are in this sense mysteries.

A mystery, then, is a truth, a fact; the word is never applied to anything else, or less; never to a fancy, never to an impossibility, never to a recognised contradiction, never to any shadowy sort of unreality; but it is a partially hidden fact or hidden truth. Truths are of two kinds, both of them truths, and, as such, equally certain; but they differ in that they are differently comprehended by us. There are some truths on which the mind's eye rests directly, just as the bodily eye rests on the sun in a cloudless sky; and there are other truths of the reality of which the mind is assured by seeing something else which satisfies it that they are there, just as the bodily eye sees the strong ray which pours forth in a stream of brilliancy from behind a cloud and reports to the understanding that if only the cloud were to be removed, the sun would itself be seen. Now "*mysteries*" in religion, as we commonly use the word, are of this description; we see enough to know that there is more which we do not see, and, in this state of existence, which we shall not directly see. We see the ray which implies the sun behind the cloud. And thus, to look upon apparent truth, which certainly implies truth which is not apparent, is to be in the presence of *mystery*.

Now, let us consider this rather more in detail. We know, for reasons which I shall not here enter on at length, that one Being only is eternal—the one Eternal is the one God. If anything distinct from Him shared His eternity,

there would be two Gods, not one ; and hence it is certain, to a serious theist, that matter cannot be eternal. Thus far the spirit of man gazes directly on open truth, and thus gazing, it infers, or rather is guided by revelation to infer, that at some time there must have been an act on the part of the one Eternal Being whereby He summoned into existence out of nothing the whole material universe, gave it form, gave it organisation, inspired it partially with life. We call that act "Creation." We know that it must have taken place ; but no sooner do we attempt to imagine it in detail, to figure to our mind the process of calling matter into existence out of nothing, than we find ourselves in the presence of mystery ; it is a truth certain to us, but behind the cloud.

And, again, we know from the testimony of the Evangelists that our Lord Jesus Christ had a bodily form, and lived a true human life upon this planet eighteen centuries and a half ago. Men saw Him, spoke with Him, touched Him, satisfied themselves by every ordinary test of His true humanity. But we also know that He Himself claimed to be infinitely more than man, claimed a homage from those around Him which was inconsistent, I do not say with the ideal perfection, but with the ordinary and reasonable modesty of mere manhood. We know that His character and His miracles were alike favourable to the supposition of His being superhuman in His real and His deepest life, and that accordingly, for these and other adequate reasons, His Church has from the first believed Him to be, and adored Him as being, very and eternal God. Thus far the soul is gazing on the truth directly ; but then come the questions, How can the same being be both God and man, both finite and infinite, the Lord of glory, and yet the Victim who dies on Calvary ? We know



it must be so; but here we are in the presence of mystery. It is a truth, but a truth behind the cloud.

And, again, as believers in revelation, we observe that not only the Father, but His only begotten Son and the Holy Spirit, who is sent both by Him and by His Son, are in various passages of Holy Scripture spoken of as properly Divine. On the other hand, no truth is more certain to a believer in revelation or more insisted on in the sacred Scriptures than the unity and the indivisibility of the Godhead. How are we to reconcile these two truths—on the one hand, the Divinity of each of the Divine substances, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; and, on the other, the truth of the Divine unity? We ask the question, and one answer only is possible, which the Church gives us as she pronounces the sacred word “TRINITY”—Three in One, One in Three. And yet, as she pronounces it, we feel that the truth, however certain to faith, is for us, with our limited faculties, a truth behind the cloud. We are in the presence of mystery.

And, once again, what do we mean by a sacrament? We mean “an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace,” a grace which accompanies the sign, and which is veiled and conveyed by it. The sign itself is patent to our bodily senses; we see the water, we see the bread and wine; and if the sign is only a symbol, if it implies no inward and accompanying gift, it is really, in a Gospel where all is or should be real—it is really not worth spending time and thought upon; but if our Lord’s words are true, and the sign is an unfailing pledge of the Divine reality that accompanies it, then that which meets the eye is but as the ray of sunlight which tells us of the sun behind the cloud—and once more we are in the presence of mystery.

Why, it is asked, should there be in religion this element of *mystery*? Why cannot everything about it be plain and obvious, lying well within the range of observation, or at least within the range of our reasoning capacities? Why should there be this outlying, this transcendental margin traced round the doctrines and the rites of Christianity—this margin within which the Church whispers of mystery, but which seems to provide a natural home for illusion? This is probably what Toland, by no means the least capable of the English deists, thought when he undertook at the beginning of the last century the somewhat desperate enterprise of showing that Christianity is not mysterious. To strip Christianity of mystery was to do it, he conceived, an essential service—to bring it, in the phraseology of his day, “within the conditions of nature,” within the rules of that world of sensible experience in which we live. Is it, then, the case that the natural world around us is so entirely free from that element of mystery which attaches so closely to the doctrines and the rites of Christianity? Before long Spring will be here again, and probably some of you will try in some sort to keep step with the expansions of its beautiful life even here in London by putting a hyacinth bulb into a glass jar of water, and watching day by day the leaves and the bud unfold above, and the roots develop below, as the days get warmer and brighter, until at last, about Easter time, it bursts into full and beautiful bloom. Why should the bulb thus break out into flower, and leaf, and root, before your eyes? “Why,” some one says, “they always do.” Yes, but *why* do they? What is the motive power at work which thus breaks up the bulb, and which almost violently issues into a flower of such beauty, in perfect conformity to a general type,

and yet with a variety that is all its own? You say it is the law of growth; yes, but what do you mean by the *law of growth*? You do not explain it by merely labelling it—you explain neither what it is in itself, nor why it should be at work here, or under these conditions. You cannot deny its existence, and yet the moment you endeavour to penetrate below the surface it altogether eludes you. What is this but to have ascertained that here is a fact, a truth, hidden behind the cloud that is formed by the surface aspect of nature? What is this but to be in the presence of mystery?

Or, one of our fine winter evenings gives you a fancy for astronomy, and one of the first facts which you encounter in this wonderful subject is that law of attraction which keeps the heavenly bodies in their orbits, that law which governs all that is greatest, and all that is least, in the world of matter—the minutest atoms and the most stupendous suns. The reign of attraction is indisputable; the ratio in which one mass attracts another can be stated in mathematical language, and we, you and I, live as we do upon the surface of the planet which God has given us as our home, instead of flying off into space, because we are detained, gently but irresistibly, by this law of attraction. We repeat the word “attraction” over and over again, until we think that by repeating it we know all about it, and yet what do we know in hard reality? Attraction! It is something that none of us has ever seen, or heard, or touched; we know not whether it resides in the attractive masses themselves, or whether it is a quality of some sort distinct from them; we cannot say what in itself it is, we cannot say why it should exist at all. The longer we consider it, the more convinced we become on the one hand of its reality, on the other of its transcending all our powers of analysis

and detection; it is a truth, but it is a truth behind a cloud—we are in the presence of mystery. Or when a few minutes hence you rise from your seats to leave this cathedral, what will happen? You will make up your minds, you say, to go away, and you will go away—that is all. Yes, but what does that mean? It means that an impalpable immaterial force, be it thought or will, which you name “I,” will in each case put in motion such and such material forms, which you call limbs, and will make them do its bidding. Now, how can a purely spiritual, immaterial essence, of the existence of which you are, or may be, certain by experience, exert this influence upon pure matter? What relation is there between spirit and matter which yields any tolerable approach to an explanation? The process is so constant, and so familiar to all of us, that we are not alive to its intrinsic wonder; and yet, if we will but think steadily about it, we should see that here, too, is a truth, certain, yet for us, and altogether behind the cloud; that here, too, we are in the presence of mystery. And when you have passed beyond the doors of the church, you will probably begin to talk to each other, and thus will find yourselves face to face with another mystery of nature, if you can only break through the benumbing effect of long familiarity sufficiently to recognise it. Think of what human language really is. It is a variety of sounds produced by bodily, that is to say, by material organs, and, as sound, itself belonging to the material world. And yet its value and significance belong not to the realm of matter, but to the realm of spirit. It is itself physical, yet it gives shape to so immaterial a thing as pure thought. It is only apprehended by sense. Yet it is a messenger charged with a duty of communicating the most subtle undulations of thought from one

spirit to another ; it bridges the gulf between these immaterial essences, which at the centre of our being we each one of us are ; it binds spirit to spirit by creating common convictions, common feelings, common resolves, or it flashes fire from spirit to spirit, kindling into fierce flame responsive passions and leaving wounds deep, and perhaps ineffaceable, throughout an eternity. Why should such a petty physical incident as articulated sound be charged with these powers and attributes, having such effect and empire in the world of spirit ? Ah ! you may well ask *why* ! Think that question over and over, and the longer you think of it the more surely will you be convinced that here, too, is a pregnant fact hidden behind the cloud, which as yet we cannot penetrate—you will know that you are once more in the presence of mystery.

The philosopher Locke laid down the doctrine, which has been often quoted since his time, that we cannot acquiesce in any proposition unless we fully understand all that is conveyed by each of its terms, and hence he inferred that when a man tells us that any mystery is true, he is stating that to which we cannot assent, because a mystery, from its nature, is said to be a hidden and, therefore, uncomprehended truth. This, at first, seems plausible enough ; but, in fact, we may, and do, assent reasonably enough to a great many propositions respecting the terms of which we have only an obscure or an incomplete idea. A man born blind may, I take it, reasonably assent to the descriptions of objects which we who have the blessing of sight see with our eyes, although probably no description could possibly give him an adequate impression of the reality. Locke himself, like the strong thinker that he was, admitted, could not but admit, the infinite divisibility of matter ; yet had he, has any man,

an adequate conception of what this means ? Think of it steadily for a moment—think that an atom may be divided, and each division subdivided, again and again, and that, although the continuously subdivided particles will soon become too minute to be obvious to sense, yet no particle will ever be so minute as to resist further subdivision, so that the process may be continued indefinitely. The imagination follows for a time, and then it fairly recoils from the task, as it does from the task of conceiving limitless space, or endless duration of time. The infinite divisibility of matter—what is this but a truth, certain to reason, yet, for such as we with our limited faculties, a truth behind the cloud ? It, too, belongs to the sphere of mystery.

Brethren, we are merely touching on the fringe of a vast subject, capable of an almost illimitable expansion. Science does not exorcise mystery out of nature ; it only removes its frontier, in some cases, a step further back. Those who know most about nature are most impressed, not by the facts which they can explain and reason on, but by the facts which they cannot explain, and which they know lie beyond the range of explanation. To treat nature as not mysterious is to mistake that superficial, thoughtless familiarity with nature for a knowledge based on observation and reflection. •

“ Where'er the depths we trace, there opes beyond  
An inner world where science lifts her torch ;  
And glorious links we see of heavenly mould,  
But cannot break the chain. Thyself, unseen,  
Sittest behind the mighty wheel of things  
Which moves harmonious, though unheard below.”

And the mysterious creed of Christendom corresponds with nature, which is thus constantly mysterious, while



both are only what we should expect in revelation. And nature, too, in its way, is a revelation of the infinite God. Suppose, if you can, that a religion claiming to come from God were wholly divested of this element of mystery ; suppose that it spoke of a God whose attributes we could understand as perfectly as the character of our next-door neighbour ; and of a government of the world which presented no more difficulties than the administration of a small joint-stock company ; and of prayer, and rules of worship, which meant no more than the conventional usages and ceremonies of human society. Should we not say—you and I—"Certainly this is very intelligible ; it is wholly free from the infection of mystery ; but is it really a message from a higher world ? Is it not too obviously an accommodation to our poor, dwarfed conceptions ? Does it not somewhere in its system carry the trade-mark of a human manufactory ?" After all, we may dislike and resent mystery in our lower and captious, as distinct from our better and thoughtful, moods ; but we know on reflection that it is the inevitable robe of a real revelation of the Infinite Being, and that, if the great truths and ordinances of Christianity shade off, as they do, into regions where we cannot hope to follow them, this is only what was to be expected if Christianity is what it claims to be.

*"Stewards of the mysteries of God"*—that is the idea of the apostolic and ministerial office which St. Paul would have his Corinthian readers lay to heart. The office has undoubtedly other sides and functions ; but this aspect of it was well calculated to lift a great subject above the degraded level to which the personal and petty quarrels of Corinth had dragged it down—above the invidious comparisons, above the worthless discussions, that were

bandied about between his own adherents and those of St. Peter and Apollos. In this higher atmosphere, the man, the steward, would be forgotten in the office. It matters not who plants or who waters, or what are the outward characteristics of this steward or of that. Everything merely personal shrinks away into its proper insignificance in the presence of the sublime, yet humbling, relation of each and all to the "*mysteries of God.*"

"*Stewards of the mysteries of God*"—guardians and dispensers, not of any store of merely human knowledge or of moral influences of mere human origin and compass, but guardians and dispensers of truths which in their magnificence elude comprehension and measurement, which, while they touch each man's life most searchingly and intimately, reach far away into the distant heavens—guardians and dispensers of ordinances which are no mere symbol of absent blessings, but instruments of direct contact with the unseen and glorified Redeemer, and so are charged with forces of incomparable value to the souls and the bodies of men, for of a truth all these mysteries of revelation centre in one sublime mystery which is the heart of all besides, which says less to our speculative faculties, less to our sense of wonder, than it says to our hearts and wills—the mystery that God the almighty, the infinite, the everlasting, the all-wise, "*so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*"

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## *II. Expository Section.*

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### THE SECOND PSALM.

BY THE REV. F. W. MACDONALD, M.A.

THE Psalm opens abruptly ; here is no prelude ; it is an utterance of amazement, begotten in the soul, and breaking from the lips of one who looks out upon the nations and generations of man. It is as though the seer had stood upon that high mountain, from whence the ruler of the darkness of this world showed to the Son of Man all the kingdoms of this world, and all the glory of them. Within the range of his vision lay kingdoms and empires, tribes and races of men, strong, civilized, illustrious ; their achievements, their palaces, lay around, witnesses of their might and prowess. But he discerns, in all the wide-spread view, one perpetual restlessness, one ceaseless movement of discontent, the throbbing of a rebellion that cannot be appeased, of a vain, bitter, ceaseless revolt. "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing ?" But while the murmur of the people is inarticulate, from the lips of their rulers that rebellion has form and utterance. "For the kings of the earth, and the rulers, take counsel together." In their councils the secret of the people's restlessness is made known. "Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us." It is this revolt against God and His Christ running

through the centuries, underlying human history, breaking out in fresh manifestations age after age, finding new utterance from the kings and rulers and wise men of this world ; it is this revolt against God which reveals itself to the vision of the Psalmist ; this unbroken, ceaseless aspect of human life and activity ; the kings and the rulers of men, who have governed nations, founded empires, guided their fellows, set the fashion of the world's thinking and the world's desiring—why do they take counsel against God, and imagine this vain thing ; why do they say of the Lord and His anointed, "Let us break their bands asunder"? Brethren, it is good for us to look at and understand the true nature of the rebellion against God and His Christ, which is to be discerned in the palaces of kings, in the lusts of nations, in the current and tide-wave of human speculation, and curiosity, and endeavour. That rebellion against God, which in the vast ignorant masses of the world is half unconscious, in their leaders finds utterance, assumes shape and formula. The kings and rulers of the earth are they who, whatever be the sphere of their authority, lord it over their fellow-men. In the primitive ages of the world they are ruling princes in whose hand is sword and spear, the Nimrods, the Nebuchadnezzars, the Pharaohs, the men who rise above the petty herd of their subjects, and are as gods ; the men who build cities by an edict, who transplant populations by a single decree. But as the world moves on, as its ideas broaden and multiply, the fashions of social and national life are altered, and power is no longer that simple thing it once was. Kings are not necessarily found on the thrones of nations ; they are the men whose wealth, or mental power, or whose grasp of the conditions and circumstances of life, gives them authority over their fellows ; all who set the fashions

in thinking, who strike the key-note to which the vast majority of their fellows are willing to tune the strain of their own life. You may legislate as you will, but there will be still kings and rulers amongst men ; men who lead while others follow, who have power to say "go," and men will go, and "come," and they will come ; and it is from these men of the sword, paper, tongue, and brain, it is of these the wondering Psalmist challenges an answer. Why does the world fret against the government of God ? Why has it no better words for the rule of God and His Christ than these : "Bands, to be broken ; Cords, to be cast asunder." But is this the vision of some heated seer, driven from among his fellow-men by wild and high-wrought fancies ; is this man looking upon some vision of his own overstrained imagination ? Oh brethren, not so. Let the history of our race, in all its varied, sorrowful, pathetic episodes, answer that question ; let the aspect of the world this day reply to that. What restlessness, what sin, what strife, after ever-changing hopes and ideals ; what sacrifices of happiness, and honour, and peace to the lusts of wealth, pleasure, and power ; what repudiation of the very name and authority of God and His Christ ; or, worse still, what practical repudiation of the authority of Christ alongside of a formal acknowledgment of His authority. Let any one step out for a moment from the centre of mere conventional and local topics, let him for a moment so far draw back as to get a real perspective of the human history now working out, and will there not, by-and-by, break from his lips this wondering exclamation, "Why does the world resent and resist the rule of the righteous God, and of the redeeming Lord Jesus Christ." Whether it be the sins and sorrows of one city that come within your range, whether it be the notes and tones of

the very last phase and stage of philosophic speculation ; whether it be the problems that vex, and chafe, and worry the civilized world ; whether the spectacle of our exaggerated over-developed militaryism, under which the whole continent of Europe groans and bleeds ; or whether the vexed problems that lie in our own streets and houses ; alike the question arises : " Why does the world, in things great and small, chafe against the rule of God—God the Source of wisdom, the Giver of all good ; against Christ the Redeemer of human nature ; against Christ, man's true King, and Leader, and Guide, and Friend, and Shepherd, and Bishop of souls. " Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing ? "

" Let us break their bands asunder," etc. Is there no better name for the laws of God and His Christ, than " bands " and " cords " ? Is there no one to rise and say, " These, that thou callest ' bands ' and ' cords,' are but the conditions of a yoke that is easy, and a burden that is light " ? " Let us break their bands asunder." Is there no one to cry : " Great peace have all they that love Thy law, and nothing shall offend them " ? " Let us cast His cords from us." Is that freedom, which has spurned the cords of Christ ? Is that liberty for men and nations, into which men enter, when the bands of the world's Redeemer have been broken and renounced ? Oh, if either men or nations could learn, with a calm, unbiassed, unwarped, moral intelligence, in what innumerable instances has God shown to us, with all possible weight of illustration, that there is no liberty for a man, or for a people, except the liberty of obedience to God, and loyalty to Christ our Saviour !

" The kings and the rulers take counsel together." We still follow our leaders. Half the world, nay, nine-tenths



of it, live in the imitation of the minority. It is so in the schools of philosophy, in social life; it is so in every region where man's earthly interests lie. And if we are to study the aspects and explanations of the world's rebellion against God, it may be found, in its clearest forms at least, in the example, and spirit, and teaching of those whom the multitudes blindly follow—Godless power, Godless wealth, Godless intellect. All these are represented amongst the kings and rulers of the earth. One may look to one nation, and there you find power exercised without righteous restraint or government; the power of wilfulness and selfishness weighing very heavy on the moral life and true welfare of the people. But even while we are boasting that such is not the case with us, our own city will yield illustrations, as true and as affecting, of the way in which rule and authority is made to tell against God and His Gospel. "Let us break His bands asunder." Am I doing injustice to certain very familiar aspects of thinking and teaching with which our daily literature makes us familiar? Am I speaking hastily or narrowly, when I say that running through much of the cleverest, most pungent, and telling, of our modern literature, this cry may be heard, "Let us break His bands asunder," or in other words, man is taught, and encouraged to release himself from mental and moral subordination to a living and personal God. They who know best the literature of the day can best answer the question, whether I am putting it unfairly, that man is encouraged to think of himself as dealing only with laws, and forces, and conditions, and that a Creator God, and a Redeemer Christ, and an everlasting life through faith in Jesus, are to be cast aside as bands upon the intelligence of man; as cords impeding the freedom of his moral and intellectual growth.

"He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, the Lord shall have them in derision." What shall we say of the Psalmist's bold word here. "The Lord shall laugh." A strong, solemn, bold, terrible utterance that. Put it into our feeble prose, take it out of the prophet's song, and put it into our limp and halting prose, and it comes to this; the Psalmist sees the utter futility of revolt against God; he discerns the strength of the Almighty; the pillars of the eternal throne are before his soul; he sees from afar the strength and majesty of God, and, looking down upon all the feeble, foolish wisdom of the world that sets itself against God, he can find no other words to express the vanity of man's revolt than to say "The Lord shall laugh," etc. Yes, brethren, here comes into the prophet's vision a truth of which there is much need to remind our own hearts. It is assumed very freely around us, not only by careful thinkers, who are always in the minority in any community, but by the run of careless and second-hand thinkers, it is far too readily assumed that God, and judgment, and righteousness are to each man as he conceives them, not having positive existence of their own, but that they are rather the outcome and projection of a man's own sentiment, as it has been said, over and over again of late, "man creates his God." The old record says, "In the beginning God created man," but as it runs now, man it is that creates God, thinking of Him as he can, and as he feels, and so bringing forth from his own mind a conception of Divinity by which he shall be ruled. Now, brethren, side by side I notice two strange, conflicting, and opposing tendencies in modern thought. First of all, as I have just said, in reference to things spiritual, of the existence or possible character and will of God, and righteousness, and judgment, and eternal destiny. With

regard to all these there is a wide-spread assumption that there are no positive, or ascertained, or ascertainable truths, but that all things are relative, and subject to man's own suggestions, from the poor gropings of a savage up to the more refined product of a civilized mind, and thus it is a simple outcome of sentiment and conception in man, not having a positive, but only a relative existence. Side by side with this conception you know the conception with regard to the physical universe. Here all is positive and real, not dependent upon the subjective ideas in men's minds. And here we have men, who have absolved us from all responsibility to a personal God, and who have welded the future to an authoritative and inexorable Nature. "Yes," they say, "Nature is inexorable; if men will work under her, she will guide him to fortune; if he will work with her, his work shall prosper; if he will work for her, she will be generous in her rewards; but if he work against her, she is inexorable, and will destroy; she pardons no mistakes, always exacts the fines from men. Here is a conception of inexorable law, proceeding throughout the whole material and physical universe; and, it is said, man's wisdom lies in discovering Nature's mind, and not quarrelling with it; let him find what Nature means, and fall in with her meaning, or he will soon disappear, swept from the struggle." I have no criticism to make upon that theory of Nature, but I ask you to notice the strange position, side by side, of the inexorable law in the physical universe, and the fluidity of the moral law. Understand Nature, and she shall prosper thee; she shall laugh and have in derision those who fly in the face of her laws. Let a man quarrel with the main, great, ascertained laws of the material universe—let him build his house in disregard of them, of the nature of materials,

and the laws of gravitation and cohesion—and Nature will show him whether she has operation or not. Brethren, this, which is true in Nature, is no less true in relation to morals and to righteousness; and I say, as is said of Nature, work with God, and you are blessed; work for God, and He shall reward you abundantly; work under God, and He shall guide you even into everlasting life; but work against God, and the Lord shall laugh, He shall have thee in derision; the pillars of His Throne are fixed. Men are suffered to go on longer credit in their rebellion against God than in their quarrel with Nature; God does not resent, with the sharp swiftness of the material world, the violation of His law; but do not interpret the forbearance of God into indifference, or a non-existence of His control and power. The fore-determined result of rebellion against God is overthrow, as complete and remediless as, in another sphere, revolt against the laws of Nature is. Why do the heathen rage? why do princes, rulers, kings, rich men, lords of fashion, lords of thought, lords of lust and self-indulgence, why do they so live, so do without God? “Let us withdraw our national life from God and His government; let us live and die without Him.” Why do they thus? The Psalmist’s thought is not as to the wickedness of the counsel; it is not merely as to the folly of the counsel; it is the futility of it that wrings this cry from him. Do we take that aspect of the matter into account, it is a profane and wicked thing to live in rebellion against God. God has spoken to you and me; we have sacred law and holy Gospel, the revelation of His righteous will. We have His Incarnate Son Jesus Christ, the plain and authoritative call of the merciful God to repentance of our sins, to faith in Christ, to obedient and holy life, even everlasting life. Now to refuse it, to rebel against it, to

stop our ears, to harden our heart to it, is profane and wicked, is taking part with evil against that which is good, and it is to our own hurt ; it is the very crown and acme of folly ; the sick man insulting and sending away his physician, the starving man railing at the hand of bounty, the mariner in mid-ocean sinking his own ship. To quarrel with God is that folly which, if the world generally were not bewitched with it, would be the standing illustration of far-gone foolishness. But that is not the aspect of it that wrings this cry from the Psalmist's heart ; it is the failure of rebellion. "The Lord shall have them in derision." Now in earthly, in human politics, it has come to be accepted as an axiom, not without a certain cynical wisdom, that men should never rebel unless they can succeed. Rebellion that fails is a vast folly. The only rebellion in which wise men will ever enter, is a rebellion with reasonable chances of success. What of rebellion against God ? Let a man stand up in his strength, a man, with his breath in his nostrils, that was born but yesterday and shall die to-morrow, let him stand up before the King Eternal, Immortal, Invisible, the only wise God ; let him take to him what he can of shield and sword forged in the armouries of this rebellion ; let him take what extemporized sling and spear his hands can best handle, as a weapon of warfare, and, as he rises to challenge the authority of the everlasting God, the earth beneath him can hardly keep silence, and the heavens above marvel at the spectacle of folly and presumption on which they look down ; and the Lord shall laugh, the Almighty shall have them in derision. Brethren, there are many other aspects of this matter, and you hear them from this place week by week, month by month, and year by year ; but the note struck by our subject this morning is the madness of

disobedience, the futility of revolt, the uselessness of rebellion—"The Lord shall laugh," etc. ; "Then shall He speak unto them in His wrath," etc. In other words, God's answer to all the rebellion of the nations is a re-affirming of the sovereignty of Christ. I pray you to take this thought, then we must close. The sovereignty of Christ over man's heart, and life, body and soul, for time and for eternity, is the thing in dispute ; it is disputed by every man that follows the lusts of his own flesh ; it is disputed by every man who seeks his portion and happiness in things earthly ; the rule of Christ over man is disputed by all thinkers, who, rejecting that corner-stone of all wise philosophy, seek to build their house on other foundation. Now there is around us—don't let us disguise the matter—a very wide, and, though composed of very different elements, a generally agreed rebellion against the bands and the cords of the Christ of the Gospel. Many, who wouldn't be partners in anything else, become partners in this ; superfine, dainty, delicate gentlemen and ladies, too, have this in common, that they want life, life without Jesus of Nazareth ; life with other aims and inspirations than those that flow from Bethlehem and Galilee ; and then, swelling their cry, repeating it in grosser terms, carrying it out in all manner of rough, unlovely applications, come the great multitude of the sensual, the covetous, the unclean ; to them the laws of Christ are indeed bands and cords ; youth chafing under the touch of Christ's "Follow thou Me" ; manhood quarrelling with Christ's "Seek ye *first* the kingdom of God" ; the cynic refusing to obey : "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart." When revolt becomes pretty widespread, and one and another is drawn into it, the question is sometimes asked, "Is the thing after all going to succeed ? Will they carry



their point?" That is what men say when national disaffection attains certain stages of development; men begin to say, "perhaps this thing may go, after all." May I put it to you this morning, not as a rhetorical device, which I abhor, but to stir the finer of your own thoughts; is it going to be that by the help of handfuls of superfine and intelligent thinkers, and the armsful of those who catch up their thoughts and re-utter them, and the whole streets-full of the rougher and coarser thought, are they going to break up the old system? Is it to be so?

God's answer to all this is a solemn re-affirmation of the crown and sceptre rights of the incarnate Lord,—“I have set My king upon My holy hill.” “I have set.”—There is no revoke, no withdrawal, no compromise, no meeting proud human nature thus far. “I will withdraw the scheme of salvation through faith in a crucified Christ, and rule thee after another manner better fitted to the thoughts in thine heart.” Not so. The Lord's answer to men and nations is, “I have crowned My Son; I have set Him as King upon the holy hill of Zion; all power is given to Him”; “This is my well beloved Son, hear Him.” Oh let those who slight, who disparage, who play daring and profane experiments upon the power and patience of God, let them bethink them; God is God as yet and for evermore, and Christ is the crowned, enthroned Lord of men, having the keys of death and of hell, power in heaven, power on earth, able to save to the uttermost all that come unto Him, and having a rod of iron with which to break in pieces the nations, even as a potter breaks his vessel.

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### *III. Sermon to Children.*



#### LOVE ONE ANOTHER: A PARABLE.

BY THE REV. RICHARD GLOVER.\*

“Let us love one another.”—I. JOHN iv. 7.

I SPEAK this morning, according to custom, to the young here. If I make my sermon into a story, I don't think they will object; and I think the grown-up people, who remember how many of Christ's sermons were stories, will themselves also perhaps not object. Accordingly, then, my sermon on this text is to be a kind of story. One day, a servant of God, called Speak-the-Truth, came into the midst of Vanity Fair; he found it as full, and noisy, and busy, and foolish, and wicked, as it was when Christian and Faithful went through; there were the fine shops, and there were the shows and theatres, and there was the dancing, and there was the drinking, and the racing, and the revelling, and all the secret sights that Bunyan saw when he described it; and the servant of God, who had truth in his heart, opened his lips and began to preach to the people. They were not quite so rough as they were in Christian's days, so that they didn't oppose him, and didn't burn him as they did Faithful; but still very few listened, and fewer still regarded what he said. They thought him a man of amiable peculiarities, very foolish generally in his testimony, and sometimes

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when he warned them of their sins and called them to repent, they resented what he said as being disrespectful to their character ; but still they rather liked to listen to him when he preached about the love of God, they felt somehow their chances for the future were improving. One day when the Fair was rather dull, and they were in a calmer mood than usual, a number of them came round him and said they would like to hear his views on the main business of life ; he had no doubt given a good deal of attention to these things, and they would like him to tell them what was the right thing to do under the sun, so that they might have the most joy in life. He put aside their flattery, and was glad to accede to their request, and at once began to preach, and he said, " If you want to know the best thing to be done with life, this is it, '*Love one another.*' " And he urged upon them that loving was the art of living, that love had lots of joy, that love made duty an easy yoke, that love made many friends, that love gave health of soul, that love filled men with light, and that the great wisdom in the world is to love. Now I said it was rather a dull day, but if they were dull when they came to him, at once they all began to make merry ; it seemed such an absurd thing you know for this Speak-the-Truth to tell them that love was the wisest thing in the world, and that it should be the main business of anybody's life. If he had said that love was one-tenth of a man's life, they would have admitted it, but when he made it the top and bottom, the inside and out, the whole of life, then they thought it was very amusing. And all at once they began to argue with him, and one after the other to tell him that he must be mistaken, that he had overlooked important things, and that life, wise

life, couldn't possibly be love. For instance, one said, he was forgetting, he thought, that there were very few people who deserved to be loved ; that there were a great many who were mean, who were stupid, who were cross-headed, and a great many that were cruel, and of course, he said, you couldn't go and love them. And then another said that the preacher also seemed to have forgotten that you couldn't love people if you didn't, you couldn't make yourself like people when they didn't approve themselves to your judgment. Another said love was a very costly thing, that it spoiled good bargains, and kept you from gathering the large fortune ; that, for his part, he would rather have a full pocket than a large heart. And some others argued that they couldn't be expected to love when they themselves weren't loved. And another said that a man did well enough when he loved his wife and children, and that he couldn't be expected to go beyond them. And another said that nobody but fools loved their neighbours, because nobody thanked them for it, and everybody took advantage of it. And another said that was quite true, and nobody had a soft heart unless he had a soft head. So that all argued something or other against the doctrine of *Speak-the-Truth* ; and one very sarcastically said that the preacher seemed to have forgotten that there were such things in the world as money, as comforts, and pleasures, and honour, and that everybody in that life was nothing unless he had some of them. So they sat upon the preacher, and thought they had closed his mouth ; and they thought within themselves that nobody could compare with the people of *Vanity Fair* for wisdom. However *Speak-the-Truth* wasn't to be so easily put down ; he had reasons for all he had said, he had experienced it all. But he knew it wasn't easy to convince

these people, and so he prayed swiftly, as earnest people can pray, to his Master, to give him something with which to answer these people. And the Master, answering his secret prayer, gave him liberty to call in the good fairies to give their witness on the matter. For you know there are such things; it matters not what you call them; some people call them fairies, some call them angels. And Speak-the-Truth was very much delighted at this, and said to the people that he had some heavenly friends who he thought would speak to them, and as they didn't quite agree with what he said, he would call some of them in and they could hear their testimony.

The first fairy that came in to give evidence was a very beautiful creature, her name was Sunshine. She seemed to have come straight from heaven, and all sorts of gladness flashed in her eye; and when she came they were all hushed with astonishment and respect. And Speak-the-Truth told her what they had been arguing about; he told her that he had been teaching these people that love was the bliss of life, and that if they wanted to be happy they must love; but that some of them had said love wasn't the bliss of life, but money, and comforts, and pleasures; what did she think? She said that she knew all about happiness because she made it. She said that her Master told her to get into as many hearts as she could, and put as much happiness into them as she could get. She said she knew some of the gentlemen that were standing round, because she had been occasionally inside of them, but was sorry she wasn't permitted to stay very long. She said there were many hearts she couldn't get into at all, however much she tried. She said that they knew when she was in anybody's heart, because she always looked out of the eye-window, and they could see the sunlight.

She said, moreover, that Speak-the-Truth was right so far as happiness was concerned, because, she said, she could always get into a loving heart whenever she wanted. She said that Love and she had played in heaven together, and that Love was always glad to open the door and let her friend Sunshine in. But, she said, she couldn't easily get into rich people's hearts ; that they were always so anxious to get money, or so afraid of losing it, or so disappointed in the using of it, that somehow she couldn't get in, and if she did get in she was soon squeezed out again. And she said she couldn't get often into hearts that were full of what the world called pleasures ; for, she said, the most melancholy people in the world were those who lived in pleasure. But, she said, whenever anybody loved those around them, she could always get into their hearts, and all all sorts of delights she could give to them ; for, she said, loving itself was a delightful thing, the sweetest thing in all the world, and being loved was the next sweetest thing. She said, besides, that love kept away envy and grief, which were the great troubles of men. She said that love was always contented. She said that gratitude filled the hearts of the loving, and that was a delight. In fact, said Sunshine, I fill all heaven with gladness, because it loves ; and whenever any heart loves, I come in and brighten it with the light of love ; so that Speak-the-Truth was quite right when he said if anybody wanted to be happy they must begin and love.

Now the Vanity Fair people didn't look quite so sure of their being wise after this fairy called Sunshine had spoken ; for they began to think that perhaps there was another side that they hadn't looked on. After she was done, there was a sudden flash of light, and in a moment she was gone. And, instead of her, they saw another.



fairly, beautiful in face and form, and radiant with a great jewel like the High Priest's jewel on his breast, that had gleamed in the sky for all the ages since God made the stars. This one's name was Morning-Star. He was one of those who sang together for joy when all things were made, and sang because God had made all things good. When he came, Speak-the-Truth addressed him and explained to him the controversy he had with the people round about him. He told Morning-Star that some there had said that most people weren't worth loving, and that therefore you oughtn't to love them; and that some others had said they couldn't love a lot of people, that it wasn't in them to do it, and it was no use telling them; what did he think? And Morning-Star said that he had seen everybody that had ever lived; had looked in their faces—babes, grown-up people, old people, black and white, all the world over. He said, you see me only an hour or two a day, but I see you twelve out of the twenty-four; and I know everybody that has ever lived. *Nobody ever lived that wasn't worth loving.* He said there is something bad in the best men, and there is something good in the worst men; and if you knew what God can make out of men that are sometimes bad, but repent, how they come to love much because they are forgiven much, you would begin to see that even in nasty people, mean people, and cruel people, there is something that makes them worthy to be loved. And he said, now love can find out that better part, can see it and develop it, and bring it out, and help it to grow. Speak-the-Truth is right, everybody is worth loving. And he also said that Speak-the-Truth was right when he said that everybody can love; if he likes to love, everybody can love. He said, there is not a heart so narrow in the world but it can learn to love. Show kindness, and

you will come to feel love, he said. So that, according to Morning-Star, all people round about us have something good in them, which makes them worthy of our love ; and in all our hearts there is something which, if we cherish it aright, can grow to love.

And again the people of Vanity Fair looked at one another and were astonished at the new doctrine, and were very glad when Morning-Star disappeared before there was any need for them to say anything in reply.

Then he called another fairy ; her name was Wisdom : queenly in aspect and beautiful in face, as if familiar with all truth, and accustomed to command. And Speak-the-Truth told her of the dispute which he had with these people ; he told her that he had preached that love was wisdom, that the wiser men were, the more they loved ; and that the more they loved, the wiser they got ; but that the men around had declared that kindliness was foolishness, and that a wise man would take care of himself, and would think very little about other people.

And this fairy again said that Speak-the-Truth was right ; for she said that she tried to make her way into all kinds of hearts, and that whenever she entered a heart, she gave it some of her own wisdom. She said that she had a good deal of difficulty in getting into hearts, and sometimes very clever people wouldn't let her in, and, though they were clever, they remained without the wisdom that knew what to do and how to save their life from folly and from wrong. But she said that while she found great difficulty in getting into the hearts of the proud and the clever and other sorts of people, she could always get into a loving heart, because she said the loving heart was calm, quiet, and sober, and teachable ; and, getting in, she was able to give every heart that loved, sweetest wisdom ; that

they got wisdom to do their duty ; that they got wisdom to carry the responsibility of life aright ; that they got wisdom, the wisdom that lives a life which makes no regrets, the wisdom that lives a life that grows strength and power, and usefulness, and true riches, and great reward. She said, moreover, that God was Love, and all heaven was Love ; and that every wise man therefore made a point of trying to be like God, and like heaven, knowing that if they went on different lines there would be no blessing and no joy. So, she said, the wisest thing anybody could do was to love ; that that was the pathway to honour, to usefulness, to growth, and to reward. She said that, especially in sacred things, Love was Wisdom ; that if a heart hadn't love, it couldn't see the love of God, and couldn't trust it ; but that the loving could believe that God was Love, could trust in Him and enjoy Him, and believe His promises, and be at rest. So that Wisdom, the fairy that was called Wisdom, gave it as her testimony that Speak-the-Truth was quite right, and that everybody that lived wisely, tried above all things to love those around them.

One more fairy, very beautiful, came to speak to them at length ; her name was "The-Mercy-of-God." And her look was just what you would expect from her name, everything that was beautiful and heavenly. She seemed just to have come from the golden streets, and her robe had all the glories of the rainbow round about the throne. She glowed with delight, and spake with a melody like that of heaven. She has the sweet power that binds broken hearts, and comforts the poor, and helps the sorrowful. And Speak-the-Truth told her the matter in dispute ; that some there denied that love was of much use to those to whom it was shown, and of none at all to those

who showed it, and that all love was waste of precious ointment. But The-Mercy-of-God said, I reside in all lives that are willing to receive me, and fit to receive me; but my Master's sorrow, she said, is that there are so few that wish for me, and so few that I can enter; because, she said, if I rest in a proud man's life it only makes him prouder, and if I rest in a hard man's life it only makes him harder. So that, though I would like to rest in every life, and enrich it, I cannot do so. But, she said, I can always dwell with those who love. "Blessed are the merciful," said my Master, "for they shall obtain mercy." That is me, she said. I come, she added, in God's providence, and reward the merciful. I come in God's grace and I forgive them; for the loving are always lowly and therefore penitent, and can easily be forgiven, and my abode is for ever and for ever with the loving hearted, and when they love they believe all things, and believing all things they are saved for ever and ever.

Many were astonished at this, most of all, for they thought The-Mercy-of-God came to very few people, and then only when they worked very hard for it. And they were still more astonished when a great group of other good fairies, Hope, Self-Respect, Peace, Angels'-Wings, Patience, Do-your-Best, Reverence, and many others, came round about, and joined in the testimony that had been given. Some of the Vanity Fair people that had been the first to speak were the last to speak now. One man grumbled, and he said that sort of doctrine might do for fairyland, but it wouldn't do for Bristol. But some others said that they thought there was a good deal in it, and that next week they would begin and try to love. But there were some others that didn't resist the doctrine, nor talk about next week, but who began to feel that their life had

been mistaken, who went home and repented of their pride, their anger, and their selfishness, and who asked the great God of Love, Christ Jesus, to forgive them and to help them to love. There were some children that did that ; more children than grown-up people. And I heard the angels talk about those children, and say that they had started on the road that led to that better country, where they love one another. And I wondered how many of the children here would go and do likewise.

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## *IV. Outline Sermons.*

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### THE FRUIT OF FAITH.

BY THE REV. CANON SCOTT HOLLAND, M.A.\*

“ We beheld His glory.”—JOHN i. 14.

FAR away down the years, at the close of the century, an old man sits brooding over the things that he had seen and heard in the cities of Judah and in the fields of Galilee. Forty, fifty, sixty years, and more perhaps, lie now between him and the scenes which he records. Sixty years—and such years!—such strange years!—years of revolution—years of judgment—years in which the old order perished in doom, and the New World rose into victory under the breath of the Spirit of God. He had himself, long ago, laid up in the Book of the Revelation the visions in which the tremendous drama of those momentous years moved toward its final and critical act. Yet, now, his look is not forward into the silences that delay the trumpet-blasts of divine action. His eyes turn ever back, over-leaping the crowded interval—back to those wonderful

\* St. Paul's, January 11, 1885.

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days when he walked behind the feet of the Master—the days when he touched, and tasted, and handled. Still his whole being hangs upon those sealed memories. Still he ponders, and weighs, and wonders, and broods. We are listening, in these first verses of St. John, to an old man's broodings. No one can mistake their tone, or be insensible to their atmosphere, as the verses fall on the ear with their solemn weight of measured monotony, serious as a winter's eve, in which the stars silently offer themselves to our eyes, one by one, in seemly order and in noiseless ease. So the great words detach themselves from his lips, single, slow, deliberate, unhasting. Round and round the story his spirit has searched, and laboured, and waited, until word could set itself to word, and phrase to phrase. No time could be too long in which to collect into one brief passage the sum and substance of all that revelation which was made known to him in the name of Jesus Christ.

So he sits, and slowly speaks, and round him are clustering close a crowd of anxious listeners. How strange that crowd would once have been to the fishermen of Bethsaida! It is a crowd gathered out of those who are scattered abroad upon the face of the earth—keen Greeks, and fervent Syrians, and cultivated Africans, with perhaps a Roman magistrate, or a Gaulish slave. Every kind of alien blood, but none, or almost none, of his brethren, the children of Abraham. The Church in which he rules is wholly Greek in tone, in temper, in habit. He has had to forget his own country and his father's house; and that house is now shattered, and that country wrecked, and all the old scenes of his far home are darkened and desolate; and never will he walk at all in those dear, familiar places, where first he looked up from his nets and saw the Master, and heard the call, and left all, and followed Him. Ah! how long ago! though it be to him but as yesterday. And now he sits alone, perhaps, in all the world of those who saw the Lord! Alone and very old, and the question is duly



pressing, Can it be that he, too, is to die, as all the rest have died—James, his brother, fifty years back, and Peter, whom he loved—can it be thirty years since Peter died?—and Andrew and Philip, so long his companions on the coasts of Asia? And will there be no one left on earth of those who were his friends, who will be there to greet the Lord when He comes again, as they had seen Him go?

Yet what was it the Lord promised, when Peter pressed Him by the lake-side, on that awful dawn when they whispered, "It is the Lord"? Was it not that he, John, should be there alive, tarrying long until the glad day when He should come again, and their joy should be full?

So he had half thought, so many had asserted, and yet it was not quite that. No; but only that perhaps it might be so, if Christ willed that he should so tarry.

And would He will it? Often he had prayed for this to be, and cried, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." Yet now it seemed otherwise. Now it seemed as if after all he would die without seeing it. So it felt to him; so it looked; it must now be very near! And much as he and they had longed for the other to be true, yet still he keeps reminding them that his dear Master had never said, "He should never die," but only "If I will that he tarry."

Surely, we are let in, as we read these last words of St. John's Gospel, to the very heart of the thoughts that were moving about the circle who sit round the feet of the dying Apostle! Will he die or will he not die? That is their incessant anxiety. For they had hoped so much; it is the end of all that burning longing for the coming of the Lord that St. Paul could hardly curb, nor St. Peter quiet, in their new converts.

And now, the last argument for the quick coming is being withdrawn—the last hope to which they had clung is fading. "Surely," they had said, "surely John, at least, will live to see it. Surely, the Lord cannot fail His word—the word

that He pledged to the brother who lay upon His bosom!" And the old man stills and soothes their passionate assertions. Nay, the Master never said that! All He said was, "If I will that he tarry till I come!" but He never said, "He should not die."

So they sit, and cluster, and watch—his dear children—his children not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Their anxiety is daily increasing. Many questions are abroad. Never since those first few months at Jerusalem had there been any rest from questionings and doubts. But now, at the closing days of the century—now, more than ever, they swarm and thicken. It was an age like our own—restless, ardent, disturbed, speculative, revolutionary. Brains were alert, and imaginations kindled. Meteor-hopes were flashing and vanishing; strange voices shook the people and passed. All was seething, agitated, alive. And the little flock of Christ stood in the very thick of the flood; the rains beat down and the winds roared against the house their faith had built. The Rock was under them, and the house must stand; but, for all that, it is an anxious hour within the frail and trembling shelter, as they listen to the rush of the storm. The Rock was under them; but could they touch it, and be sure? The faith is theirs, their joy and their possession. Yes! but oh! that they could be quite, quite certain that they had a firm hold on it in its uttermost and invincible verity! And lo! just in the very crisis of their sorest distress, they feel that he is dying! he, John, the last of all who could say "I touched, I tasted, I handled." And they gaze and gaze—and cling wistfully to him, as once more he goes over the old, old words that he had said a thousand times before, but which they ever and ever yearned to hear again. We can almost feel them pressing him to tell them yet more, to tell them all, as he tenderly puts them by—"Nay, my children, if I were to tell you all that Jesus said and did, why the world itself would not contain all the books that would be written."

“Oh! then, tell us just how you learned to believe”—they seem to say. “How was it? What was it? It is no easy matter, as we find it. It is no brief and ready affair. We believe, but we are sore pressed by difficulties that beset our belief. We believe, but we cannot say surely and clearly what it is that we believe. Men ask us; puzzle us; distress us. And we see so many fall away in perplexity. How can we be sure that we hold the faith in a way that will never fail us? that we hold it as Jesus meant us to hold it?” Such is the mood to which the fourth Gospel addresses itself. Not written against opponents, nor to confute heresies; it never argues, never reasons. It assumes a circle, an atmosphere of faith; it addresses believers; but the faith is troubled; believers are anxious. The Gospel concentrates itself on the effort to reassure and enhearten a belief that cannot afford to be child-like and simple any more, but must test its foundations and make proof of its security. “Beloved,” the Apostle has had to say to them, “believe not every spirit; but try the spirits whether they are of God, because many false prophets are gone out into the world.” And so now, “These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God.” Why? “That ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may, in this fuller and more certified knowledge, believe on the name of the Son of God.”

So they sat and looked up into his face—that harassed, yet loyal, band of faithful disciples! “Once more let us hear it—once more before he dies. Let him tell us yet again; let it sink into our souls; for very, very soon there will be no voice in the earth that can speak of Bethsaida, and of Capernaum, and of the sorrowful hour in the upper chamber, and of the agony upon Calvary, and of the wonder of the Resurrection morning!”

So they clustered and clung; and we—we know too well their sad anxieties, their miserable sense of orphanage, their eagerness to make quite sure! We, too, would join our voices

with theirs. "Oh! speak to us too, yet once again, dear master, our father, blessed John; we are sore harassed; we are troubled with many thoughts! Thou hast seen; thou hast lain upon His Breast. Make us sure with thy own sureness. Speak once more, and tell us. What was it that thou didst touch so nearly and love so dearly? Tell us wholly; tell us plainly. We would have thy experience; we would possess thy perfect witness!"

"We beheld His glory." That is the Apostle's deliberate answer; that is his description of the process which gained him conviction. "They beheld." They used the help of both eyes and mind; for the word suggests that they saw as men see when they let their minds follow their eyes; when they watch and think and learn as they look.

The Apostles had had no brief and unsteady sight of the Master. Nay! They had had time given them to rest their gaze upon Him, and to continue looking, as He moved, as He spoke, as He went up and down with them. In many moods and varied scenes, in hope and in fear, in exaltation and in depression, by day and by night, alone and in a crowd, as a Prophet in the glare of the public sun, as a Friend in the secrecy of confidence—in a thousand incidents unforeseen and surprising—in all they had been close, very close, to Him, and had looked with all their eyes, and had hung upon Him with all their souls, and had meditated over all that they saw, and had pondered and had brooded, and had done this slowly, by degrees, habitually, moving forward step by step to this great conclusion. So they had seen; in this sure and tested study of Him, they had lived and walked; and what was it they found by so looking?

They found a most wonderful thing. Within His flesh, deep down in the heart of His Being, there was a secret—a secret that lay hidden, and yet that could be seen and known by those who had the eyes of habitual and patient faith. It was like a Presence within a Temple—like a vision of God within

the Holy of Holies—like that glory behind the veil of the sanctuary, girdled by intervening courts, yet felt to be true by all, seen at sacred moments by privileged priests, who could bring report of it. So, within the Body of the Master those friends of His discovered His secret, His verity. It was there, as a hidden flame, which at intervals leaped out and reddened all the sky. And the secret, the verity was unlike all that they had ever heard of in men. And yet they were not without experience of the highest human excellence. For they had been under the sway of that greatest of all earth's great ones—John the Baptist. He was not only a prophet, but more than a prophet; it was he whom the Lord Himself placed highest of those born of women. They had known the full splendour of that heroic spirit, who moved all Jerusalem and Judæa, until men mused in their hearts whether it were not the Christ Himself. Yet the secret of Jesus was totally divided by irresistible and unhesitating distinctions, from everything, however high and pure, that could be found in him, or any other. When once they had known it, it was simply impossible to confuse it again with any of those gifts which grace and ennobled human character.

No! of one thing they were convinced. That which they found in Him was something that had not been in the world at all before Jesus came. It was not merely a higher form of that which had been already in others, even in the highest—in John, or in Moses. As they had known all that John could do, so too they had felt all that Moses could bring them. He had brought them a great gift. He had given them a law from God. But this peculiar grace and life which they now had received came into the world in Jesus Christ, and Him only. So strange, so new, so marvellous, so incomparable was this deep secret on which they had found themselves gazing.

And what was it, then, this secret? How could it be told, this discovery? Well, the Apostle says it was nothing short of the supreme vision of all visions. It was (and we, as we

waited and watched, became more and more certain of it)—it was the disclosure, the unveiling of God Himself. It was in character, in substance, in reality, God's own glory. Whatever men have found God to be ; whatever our fathers of old time felt God to be, as He shone in upon their hearts through the splendour of the Shekinah in the Tabernacle of Moses ; that same thing Jesus showed Himself to be and mean to us who so closely studied and loved Him. We saw Him, saw Him long, saw Him very near, saw Him very carefully ; and what we saw in Him was the glory of God—the glory as of the Only Begotten Son of the Almighty Father.

Ah ! but how could you be sure of that ? What proofs have you ? What experience ? Could you have been mistaken ?

We had both outward proofs and inward experiences, the Apostle answers. Outwardly, there was John. He asserted what we assert. He came for the very purpose of declaring it, and he made his declaration with unfaltering courage, and with unconquerable force. John stood and cried, and said, "Lo ! there standeth One among you Whom ye know not, the latchet of Whose shoe I am unworthy to loose !" He, the highest of prophetic seers ; he, who saw furthest of all born of women into the ways and the mind of God—he gave us the first witness. He first made it possible to believe it.

And, then, we had our experiences ; and of these we cannot conceivably be mistaken. For, indeed, we received within our own selves this secret of Christ ; we had it given us ; and we took of it ; we shared in His life, in His substance. Of that very power with which He was filled, of that we ourselves partook, through faith. "Of His fulness we all received." It was in us, and at work, and alive. How could we mistake it ? It made itself manifest in us in its double form—in grace, which is the new energy ; and in truth, which is the new reality. We became what we had not been before. We found ourselves vitalized with the sonship of God ; author-



ized and enabled to become new creatures. We looked at our old selves, and we knew this without a doubt, that not of them, not out of their impotence, had these strange and novel capacities sprung. No ! Not of anything that could be found in us—not of blood, nor will of flesh, nor will of man? These could not account for it. The power that was within us was the name of God. The light that shone out from us was the glory of God. We had it ; we held it ; we felt it ; we were quickened, renewed, endowed by it. We moved in it, we fed on it. We could not hesitate or doubt. To doubt ? How was it possible ? “As many as received Him, to them He gave power to become the sons of God.” The power was there in them, and they knew it—they were born of God.

Dearly beloved in the Lord ! We sit clustering still in Christ's Church, and still we keep our faith ; but our hearts are anxious and troubled, as were the hearts of those who clustered around St. John at Ephesus. We are harassed by loud and importunate inquirers ; we are harried by sharp attacks, and great gusts of doubt sweep over us and through us ; and we shake as dry and shivering leaves whirled under naked skies by wintry winds.

Oh ! if only we could but have once heard him speak ; if but once we could have listened to that voice, that tarried so long behind its Lord ! So we pray ! so we think ! and yet we have the words it spake, certified to us by those who sat round him long ago. “This is the disciple that testifieth of these things, and wrote these things ; and we, we who sit listening round him, we know that his testimony is true.” So those dead voices still speak to us, reassuring our trembling belief ; and he, too, the old man now so soon to die, he positively assures to us, before he goes, the clearness and the certainty of his testimony. “He who saw it, he, and no other, bare record ; and his record is true, and he knoweth that he saith true.” And from that hour to this the continuous Church of Christ, One and Apostolic, outliving all times and

changes, hands down from generation to generation that certified and sworn testimony, and declares, with unbroken and unhesitating voice, to all who will take or read, "This is the disciple, John, who testifieth of these things, and wrote these things; we know that his testimony is true."

We doubt the book; we cry for the living man! Yes. But these same suspicious fears would haunt us still, even if we were listening to the living voice. Is it not an old and dying man, we should be saying, talking of days very long ago? Can we trust his memory? Can we commit ourselves to his assertions? How can we tell, how can he himself tell, what changes he may have brought into his story through fifty years of brooding imagination? No, dear people; we can never get back behind all perplexities, and scruples, and doubtings. No living voice would save us from them. For the living voice asks for faith—just as much the dead book: and faith is faith. It cannot escape from its conditions. It must always, to the last, remain an act of confidence, of confidence in two things—of confidence (1) in human honesty, (2) and in Divine truthfulness. If we are not prepared to give God and man this confidence we can never push through our difficulties into the peace of belief. Argue and discuss as we will, finally, we must find ourselves facing a simple assertion, "God said," over against which can always be heard the lurking whisper of the serpent, "Hath God indeed said?" And the assertion that we face is the assertion always of a man. God's Word reaches us through the human minister. The act of faith in God's Word, therefore, asks of us always an act of trust in a man—in his loyalty, in his capacity, in his sincerity. Always we must have in co-operation with the "God spake" the human witness who asserts, "I that saw it do now bear record; and I know that my testimony is true." And, therefore, whether through book or through voice, it does not matter. Finally, we can but pass by unanswered all your swarm of questions, and challenge

you with the direct appeal—Will you trust John, who lay on the breast of his Lord? Will you trust the disciple whom Jesus loved? Will you trust the corroborating Church which declares to you “This is the disciple, John, who wrote these things; we know that he saith true”? Yes; and if he (John) tells you things which amaze and stagger, will you still trust, oh doubting and bewildered souls—will you trust an old man of ninety years, who has put his witness to all those violent and terrible tests which had for sixty years assaulted the infant Church of the first century? Who could know if not he who had touched, and tasted, and handled? Who could know the worth and the certainty of faith like him to whom it had been a living and life-long experience, approved by persecution, attested by his joy, made evident in the perfect beauty and grace of his Christlike love?

Such an one as John the aged, the beloved, it is who says to you, on the very verge of the grave—“I saw it; I saw His glory; and I tell you, it was the glory of the very Son of God.”

“We beheld it.” The belief, personal and proved, of individual believers is the final proof and testimony of the truth as it is in Jesus.

This is the fruit of our faith towards our fellow-men, to be able to say to them, “I have seen; I can speak; and I know that I say true.”

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## OUR WARFARE.

BY THE VENERABLE J. P. NORRIS, ARCHDEACON AND CANON OF  
BRISTOL.\*

“My brethren be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might,”  
etc.—EPH. vi. 10—13.

TO-DAY’S Epistle is one of those passages of Scripture that lay hold upon the imagination of childhood and are never for-

\* Preached at Westminster Abbey, November 2nd, 1884.

gotten. St. Paul might, in dry phrases, have inculcated the several duties of truthfulness, of righteousness, of faith and of hope ; but he preferred to present them to the mind's eye as in a picture. And herein he was but following the example of his Lord and Master, only with this difference that Christ's pictures were mostly parables, and St. Paul's as here or generally were allegories. The allegory is, I suppose, an assemblage of metaphors ; in the allegory before us you can count six or more separate metaphors—words, that is, diverted from their ordinary meaning and transfigured into a higher moral or spiritual meaning. First we have the girdle made to represent truthfulness ; the breast-plate, righteousness ; the sandals, activity in preaching the Gospel ; the shield, faith ; the helmet, hope ; the sword, God's word.

Now these six several metaphors might have well supplied texts for six different sermons. To-day, however, we will not attempt to consider them in detail, but rather take the passage as a whole, and among the many lessons that might be drawn from it select this one, which seems the most important lesson for our meditation—the *personal character of our warfare* ; or, if I might unfold it a little more, *our foe, a personal and super-human foe*. And, secondly, that to prevail against him we must draw our strength from One *who is also personal, and super-human, and mightier than he*.

Both these truths seem to me to be important, and specially important to us, for is there not a tendency in this age to forget these truths ? A thousand pens or tongues tell us that there is going round among us a conflict between good and evil ; but when they come to specify *what is the evil*, they assert it is crime, or ignorance, or vice. And what is the remedy ? They say it is education, good government ; it is the diffusion of healthier tastes in the life. The evil we are warned against is not the Evil One, but rather this or that evil thing ; or, if it be given a personal form, the only personal form recognized by these organs of public opinion is—alas !—

our own flesh and blood—what they are pleased to call “the dangerous classes of our population.”

Not so St Paul. Listen to him: “Our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.” I give his language in our Revised Version. His meaning is plain. Our struggle is not against men, but against evil angels of every degree, against the powers of darkness, against evil spirits, for aught we know, peopling the world around us. “A Hebraism, a Jewish mode of thought,” it may be said. “Paul knew whom he was addressing, and therefore spoke thus by way of accommodation.” So modern writers and speakers try to explain away these inspired assertions that our real enemy is a personal, evil spirit, who, all-seeing, is organizing, prompting, directing all those dangers that menace the well-being of society. Before, however, we consent to reject St. Paul’s plain statement, it may be well to consider if we shall have also to explain away equally the plain statements of our Blessed Lord.

Let two examples suffice out of the very many I might quote. “He” (the devil), our Lord says, “was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh of a lie, he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar and the father of it.” And again, “Now shall the prince of this world be cast out.” We shall have also to explain away the whole history of our Lord’s temptations—we shall have to get rid of the deeply comforting scriptures that tell us that Christ can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, because in all points he was tempted like as we are, yet without sin; for if the Lord was tempted then the temptation must have come from without—to suppose the temptation to have come from within would be a horrible blasphemy—it came therefore from without, and as it came upon Him most powerfully in the solitude, in the

wilderness, in Gethsemane, it came from some unseen spirit who could then and there approach Him, whom He Himself spoke of when He said, "This is your hour and the power of darkness," and again in the upper chamber, when He said, "The prince of this world cometh.

And two more considerations I would suggest to you, drawn from our own consciousness. I would appeal to all who have felt temptation to bad thoughts, in the moments of their solitude, to say whether there has not been a strange malignity in the manner, yea, and in the time chosen for such temptations—the malignity as of a personal being holding aloof, perhaps, for hours, and then, when we have been upon our knees to say our prayers, it may be, suddenly suggests thoughts that no mere association of ideas could possibly account for. Or again, and this I would, in the last place, specially urge, think of the inexpressible comfort of being ready to believe that such thoughts are not self-originated, of the deep comfort, ah ! and of the bright hope of redemption if "an enemy hath done this"; for all scriptures encourage us to believe that this power of the Evil One is but permitted for a while. I say for all these reasons, and others I might allege, because of the consistent testimony of scriptures, because you cannot tear it out of scripture without mutilating almost all its revelations, because Christ's temptations otherwise are inexplicable, and, because most of all it is essential to the very conception of a Redeemer; I would entreat any who have had their belief in the personality of the Evil One shaken, to consider how many beliefs, that they would not for all the world lose, may haply fall with it.

And now these reflections upon the connection of belief in a personal enemy with belief in a personal Redeemer leads us to the second part of the subject. *If our foe be truly personal, super-human and mighty, then no strength of our own will avail against him; we must draw our strength from God, Who is also personal, also super-human, and yet mightier than he.*



The armour which the Christian takes upon himself must be the armour of God. What St. Paul means by the armour of God will appear at once if we consider briefly his enumeration of its several parts. Four of these will be seen to be connected with the scheme of salvation. The first and the second may at first sight appear not to pertain to the Christian exclusively, and this is in itself instructive, surely showing how, in St. Paul's view, both worlds are God's worlds, and all mankind God's children. Righteousness, which must be the breast-plate of all truthfulness, which, like the girdle, prevents from falling, must come from God; and yet it is not less true that whatever righteousness, whatever truthfulness, man attains now or has attained in the old ages beyond the confines of Christianity, is attained or has been attained by Him, Who is the light of every man that cometh into the world.

But let us pass on, and consider how the four latter parts of the armour evidently connect themselves with Christ. Daily had St. Paul, in that captivity from which he wrote, watched the soldiers by whom he was chained. And after those soldiers had girded their tunics and clasped on their breast-plates, what next? Next they set the sandals for the feet, the shield for the left arm, the helmet for the head, the sword for the hand. And so, for the Christian, there must be the preparedness to carry the gospel of peace wherever the Master may send him; there must be also, for all, the protecting shield of faith—and if St. Paul had been asked what he meant by "faith," can we doubt that he would have answered "faith" in the Lord Jesus Christ? There must be also the good hope of salvation which, like the helmet, shall enable him to lift up his head in the day of battle; and there must be, also, the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God—the only offensive weapon allowed to the Christian, and drawn from the armoury of God. Thus we see, that whatever may be the modern popular view, that the best defence against the evil consists in good government, more science, higher education, and the like, this is not

St. Paul's view. The gospel of Christ, faith in Christ, hope in Christ, the words of Christ—by these alone, in his view, can we be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might ; by these alone can we expect to stand against the wiles of our personal enemy, and “ having done all, to stand.”

And now, in conclusion, think what it would be to us if we more habitually had present to our minds the thought of a *personal* Lord and Saviour in all our hopes and fears, connected with this world and the interests of this world. It is not to different laws or systems of education, morality, or the like that we look to most of all in connection with this world's interests ; no, it is to the *personal* influence, to the abiding nature, to the loving heart, to the living voice of this or that master of our youth and guide of our later age, or this or that parent. And if it be not the less so, or rather infinitely more so, in the most momentous issues of life, will you readily surrender this faith which has sustained the noblest and the bravest, the highest and most lovely of this world's record ; the faith that in all our dangers we may turn to One within the veil as near to us as our own souls, though all unseen, One who in His own person has explored all the infirmities of our nature, able therefore to sympathize, able to strengthen and succour us to the uttermost ; the faith that knows in the varied trials, in the sharpest pangs of affliction, there stands at our side also One whose form is that of the Son of God who endured the Cross. Oh my friends, if this blessed faith were more habitually ours, how it would strengthen us. Then in the evil day, and having done all, this life ended, we shall still stand. Amen.

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## *V. Church Life in Britain.*

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### CHURCH LIFE IN BRISTOL.

*(From a Special Correspondent.)*

[The paper under the above title published last month has been much called in question. It is fair to explain that there was considerable delay in publishing the article of our esteemed contributor, and that by an accident proofs were not forwarded to him. A distinguished clergyman in the city has kindly sent us the paper that follows.—  
ED. C. P.]

It is true that the religious life in Bristol has been stirred by various excitements during the last ten years, but it is not true that the real progress has been unobserved. No one can have seen the steady growth of life, not only in the churches, whether Episcopal or Denominational, but in the large places of business, in which services are often held by various ministers and others, without rejoicing in the solidity of the work, in the whole improved tone of society. The various Gospel Temperance agencies have done excellent work, and made vast strides, and the existence of Mission bands, in connection with many churches and chapels, prove that men have not lived on excitement, but have gone forth to bring in the lost and outcast, and in blessing others have themselves been blest.

True it is that a brotherly feeling exists between the members of the various religious bodies, but this does not prevent them from each holding their own, and teaching their own tenets clearly and without hesitation. Not only was this seen in the speeches at the Congregational Union meeting, when several sides of the Church were represented on the platform,

but it is seen Sunday by Sunday in the Lectures for the Working Classes at the Colston Hall (a building holding some 3,000 people), where Nonconformist ministers of every kind take their turn with Church of England clergy, who are not afraid of declaring their attachment to their own Church, and teaching its doctrines and sacraments, but still preach the gospel to the masses and win souls. There prevails in Bristol, at any rate among a large number, one absorbing thought, to "preach Jesus crucified," and to know nothing among men save this; so that in several churches, and in some chapels, evangelistic work goes on continuously, and inquiry meetings are held every Sunday evening. Notably, is this the case at Holy Trinity, Bristol, where the Rev. H. Armstrong Hall does a great work, at St. Werbergh's where the Rev. James Fox has a continual accession of converts, and at St. Paul's, Bedminster, where the Rev. C. J. Atherton has, in a little over six years, admitted 1,200 new communicant members of his church; so also, under the ministry of the Rev. Mark Guy Pearse, who is stationed at Portland Chapel, and whose congregations of men are remarkable, and his conversions continual; the Rev. E. G. Gange, at Broadmead Baptist Chapel, whose popularity and earnestness remain, and to whom continual blessing is given; and the Rev. W. J. Mayers, of City Road, who, though a "sweet singer," is also a soul-winner. More names could be added, for the Rev. James Davidson, of St. Paul, Portland Square, is doing a good work, as is the Rev. W. T. Hollins, of St. Peter's, who has been forming and holding a congregation since the death, more than two years ago, of the Rev. T. G. Harding. The city churches are no longer empty and unsightly, but St. Michael's, under the oversight of the Rev. J. G. Alford, and Christ Church, under the Rev. E. P. Cole, have both been restored, and are filled.

It seems unfair to say that the rich churches do not give in any larger measure to the poor, for in few cities is there such a generous spirit. The rich congregations of Nonconformists,

not only the Highbury and Redland Congregationalists, but the Clifton Wesleyans and Baptists do much to help the poor brethren in other parts of the city, by supporting Bible women and lay-missionaries, members going themselves often to labour in those parts. The City Mission, supported largely by Clifton people, send their agents all over the city, and at Christmas-time the well-to-do of the West-End of Bristol nobly contribute to all the poor parishes and causes, and, should a bad winter or a flood arise, large funds are at once subscribed by the rich to be administered by local committees chosen from every denomination. Nor are the spiritual wants of the Church poor neglected, for St. Paul's, Clifton, has long supported a Mission Curate in St. Mary, Redcliff; Christ Church, Clifton, an Evangelical church, under a most able and earnest vicar, the Rev. Horace Meyer (not an advanced church as stated), has supplied a Curate for St. Luke's, Barton Hill; Emmanuel, Clifton, has given one to St. Lawrence, part of Holy Trinity parish; and All Saints, Clifton, until lately gave one to Ashton Gate, part of the parish of St. Paul's, Bedminster, but now formed into the separate parish of St. Francis. The parish church at Clifton, the Rev. Talbot Greaves', is the only church of importance without its adopted parish, for St. Mary's, Tyndall's Park, though not supporting a Mission Curate, sends workers and help into the poor parish of St. Jude's. This has all led to a Church Extension Scheme, and four churches have already been planned, and parishes will soon be formed. From many of the Nonconformist churches have gone forth Mission and Rescue bands, and perhaps in no city have such efforts been made to carry out practically the principles of the Gospel. The Cathedral, too, has been called into use in the last few years, and in Lent and Advent special short services are held after the other services are over on Sunday evenings, and the walls of this restored pile have now often within them the various public bodies, Rifle Volunteers, Ancient Order of Foresters, postmen

and officials, members of the Young Men's Christian Association, and from its pulpit the claims of the Bible Society, among other home causes, is pleaded. The Young Men's Christian Association, with its earnest committee and its indefatigable secretary, Mr. Jameson, is doing valuable work in religious as well as social advancement, and out-door meetings in summer, and constant Evangelistic meetings and Bible classes in winter, point to something more than "ephemeral moods." These are not new projects reaching their height only to be abandoned, but the outcome of deep and earnest spiritual life, shown in the gradual growth of the membership of Christian Churches, an increased moral tone, a decrease of vice and crime, and a care for the temporal and spiritual wants of the people (as shown by recent reports), hardly ever equalled in the kingdom. These are not the wild or sensational ravings of fanaticism, "soon fading into forgetfulness," but the crystallization round Church centres and noble societies of all that is best and truest, and honouring to God and benefiting to men in their widest and deepest needs.

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## *VI. Brief Outlines and Suggestive Themes.*

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### I. THE WAR OF LIFE.

"Let not him that putteth on the harness boast himself as he that putteth it off."—1 KINGS XX. 11.

THESE are the words of Ahab, and, so far as we know, the only wise thing he ever spoke. The saying was probably not his own, but a proverb common in his time. As a warning to Benhadad the words proved true, but Ahab's own conduct in



## *Brief Outlines and Suggestive Themes.* 121

going up to Ramoth-Gilead where he perished, showed a strange forgetfulness of his own saying.

I. We have all a battle to fight. We all know what is meant by "the battle of life," but that of the Christian is inward and spiritual—a battle within a battle. Conversion to Christ brings at once peace and warfare. Our peace with God means war with the world, the devil, and the flesh. We have to fight against indwelling sin, against the temptations of the world, and against the powers of darkness. John Bunyan's pilgrim, after deliverance from his burden and his visit to the palace "Beautiful," had to be taken to the armoury and clothed from head to foot in warrior attire.

II. We have all "a harness" to put on. As the enemies we fight are spiritual so must be our armour. We have faith for a shield, righteousness for a breast-plate, hope for a helmet, truth for a girdle, and the Word of God for a sword. The armour is Divinely provided and Divinely adapted for its purpose, and nothing can be a substitute for it. Some prefer an ostentatious profession, pride of intellect, and the weapons of human learning and science "falsely so called," but experience proves their insufficiency. The Divine armour must be "put on," we must take hold and keep hold of it, otherwise it is of no avail.

III. We have all a lesson of humility and patience to learn in connection with this warfare. Young converts are apt to think they have gained the victory when they are only commencing the conflict. They are in danger from a mistaken idea of the liveliness of their religious feelings, from an imperfect knowledge of the deceitfulness of their own hearts, and from a limited perception of where their great strength lies. We must learn to depend less and less on ourselves and more and more on Christ. Our strength and victory must be in Him. We should make sure that our warfare has a happy termination. All shall be well if only the battle ends well. It is not so much your feelings in girding on the armour that have to be considered, but what your feelings shall be, and what your expectations in putting it off. We should strive to have at least the satisfaction of Paul, when he could say, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." *David Maccewan, D.D.*

(Clapham Presbyterian Church, December 7th, 1884).

## II. THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

ARE not the two stones two mirrors in which men may see what they have done? Genesis gives us physical beauty, but it also gives us moral ruin. The Commandments are not metaphysical moralities. They express the disasters and catastrophes of human life. For this reason the two tables constitute the Divine revelation of human nature. "Thou shalt have none other gods before Me." The very first temptation that assailed man was in this very direction. It was "be gods yourselves." "Thou shalt not make to thee any graven image for the purposes of worship." Surely a man will never be so little of a man as to make an image and fall down before it! But what we suppose to be an impossibility is a fact. "Honour thy father and thy mother." When Esau married into Canaanitish relations, he did that which grieved Isaac and Rebekah. Parental rights were scorned, parental sympathies were violated and dishonoured. "Thou shalt not kill." From the opening of the Book of Genesis to the end, Cain has been a dominant figure. Thus the Commandments are not fanciful suppositions of the Divine mind. They are not merely ethical theories; they are, one by one, expressive of what man has done. The ten Commandments are not ten mysteries. They do not show that virtue is divided into ten problems; they show that vice has discovered ten ways of breaking through the golden circle of obedience. We have wanted other gods; we have worshipped golden images in the place of the living Judge. Fathers and mothers we have killed. Looking at the Commandments, what should we infer as to the character of God? Do we not see a wonderful care for mankind? Is there not an undertone of affection in all the majestic speech? Are there not some tears in all this awful storm? God cannot rest until He has made the heart right and purified the fountain of life. Can we fail to see how gradually man is trained to moral purity and dignity? Education always goes down to the pupil. From the first to the last the Lord pursues an ascending and widening line. The last Commandment is the most spiritual word we have yet heard. The legislator is about to prepare the way for some nobler kingdom of new thoughts and truths and relations. He prepares the way for the higher Kingdom, the brighter revelation. The books

of the Bible must not be quoted one apart from the other. If you take a book out from the Bible you take a stone out of a temple; a star out of a constellation. We must take it in chronological sequence—on and on—until we come to the trumpets and songs and hallelujahs of the Apocalypse; then we shall know the meaning of the last sweet word, this still small voice, “the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.”

*Joseph Parker, D.D.*

(City Temple, London, December 7th).

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### III. THE TEMPLE OF HIS BODY.

“Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up,” etc.—JOHN ii., 19—21.

I. Christ’s use of enigma.

II. His consciousness of Godhead.

III. His foresight of violent death, and his willingness to endure it in order to be raised up in power.

IV. The adaptation of the restored or risen Christ to be the world’s Temple or house of prayer for all nations,—the refuge of sinners and the resort of saints.

*Donald Fraser, D.D.*

(Marylebone Presbyterian Church, December 7th).

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### \*IV. WHY.

“And see . . . why.”—EXODUS iii. 3.

What serious man is always inclined to do.

What curious man is too prone to do.

What flippant man finds it impossible to do.

The spirit of the inquirer determines the result of the inquiry. Surprises on the journey of life should awaken religious interest. To the attentive eye the so-called continuity of law or sequence is continually interrupted. Phenomena, so-called, are as perplexing as the essence of matter itself. There is an unknowable

\* These and the following are given in the *Christian Chronicle* as to appear in the second volume of Dr. Parker’s “People’s Bible,” the first volume of which, “Genesis,” has just been published. Price Eight Shillings. We are sure our readers will be glad to be directed to this most valuable and important book.

point in phenomena as well as in essences. From the right heart nothing will be withheld that is good for it. There are incidents in our life which appear to be greater than ourselves, or to challenge in us faculties which are either not present, or have not yet been awakened. Men should not run away from great sights. Nothing is to be gained by cowardice. Always distinguish between flippant rashness and daring reverence.

*Joseph Parker, D.D.*

## V. AGNOSTICISM.

“I know not the Lord.”—EXODUS v. 2.

A KIND of agnosticism more prevalent than agnosticism of a scientific kind. There is an agnosticism of the heart; there is an agnosticism of the will. Men reason foolishly about this not-knowing. Men imagine that because they know not the Lord, the Lord knows not them. This is a vital distinction. We do not extinguish the sun by closing our eyes. If men will not inquire for God in a spirit worthy of such an inquiry they can never know God. Pharaoh's no-knowledge was avowed in a tone of defiance. It was not an intellectual ignorance, but a spirit of moral denial. Pharaoh practically made himself God by denying the true God. This is the natural result of all atheism. Atheism cannot be a mere negative; if it pretend to intelligence it must, in some degree, involve the Godhead of the being who presumes to deny God; the greatest difficulty is with people who know the Lord, and do not obey Him. If they who professedly know the Lord would carry out His will in daily obedience and sacrifice of the heart, their lives would constitute the most powerful of all arguments.

*Joseph Parker, D.D.*

## VI. IDLENESS AND RELIGION.

“But he said, Ye are idle, ye are idle: therefore ye say, Let us go and do sacrifice to the Lord.”—EXODUS v. 17.

A RELIGIOUS sentiment foolishly accounted for. Men judge others by themselves. When religion is of no consequence to

them, they cannot imagine its being of any importance to others. Religious exercises are supposed to be associated with idleness. This is a sophism ; this is also a vulgarity. The popular delusion is, that engagement in religious exercises takes nothing out of the strength and vigour of the worshipper. The truth is, that an exercise of a religious kind, being of the true quality, leaves a man wholly prostrate—inflicting upon him the greatest spiritual and physical loss. The reaction is of an edifying and inspiring kind ; but so far as the man himself is concerned, if he has truly worshipped, he has gone out of himself, and to that extent has exhausted himself. We must not take other people's account of our religious inspirations. We must not be laughed out of our enthusiasm. Nothing is easier than to divert the mind from the right cause or motive of action, and to trouble the soul with suspicions of its own integrity. It is useless to attempt to disprove such accusations by mere words. Words are accounted as idle as religious exercises by the people who live a worldly and shallow life. Such people attach no moral value to words. They themselves are false in every fibre of their nature. There are not wanting to-day journalists, critics, sneerers, who account for all religious sentiment, emotion, and activity on some narrow and frivolous ground. Churches must not be deterred by what mockers say.

*Joseph Parker, D.D.*

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## VII. THE NAMES OF GOD.

“ And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them.”—EXODUS vi. 3.

THE different appearances of Jehovah. The marvellous fact that He has been made known by different names. This circumstance should put an end to all sectarian controversy. Religion is not a matter of mere name, but of spiritual reality. The word is unquestionably important, but only important as indicating something which is behind it, and infinitely greater than itself. Men know the Lord under different forms and representations. The thing to be remembered is, that it is the same Lord. The particular point of this text is, that the men themselves referred

to knew God by different names. At first they knew Him as GOD ALMIGHTY, but they had no knowledge of the name JEHOVAH. Does it follow, then, that the Lord was not Jehovah because the patriarchs did not know Him by that designation? We grow in spiritual consciousness as we grow in grace and in knowledge. The mind seems to awaken to the power of describing God by new appellations, and worshipping Him under enlarging and ennobling forms. God has many a name, and He reveals Himself to men by what name He pleases to adopt. Jesus Christ has revealed Himself to some thinkers as a Man; to other thinkers He has revealed Himself as God the Son. These views may be used in one of two ways—either as beginning a controversy which can never end, or as suggesting the infinite fulness of the Being who can represent Himself under names of limitation and names of infinity. Do not let us quarrel about the mere name. Many a man may be under the Godship of Christ, who is unable metaphysically to affirm the Godhead of the Son. Names and words in this connection must be thoroughly well defined and understood before they are turned into weapons of controversy and assault.

*Joseph Parker, D.D.*

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#### VIII. THE MIRACLES OF CHRISTIANITY.

“When Pharaoh shall speak unto you, saying, Shew a miracle for you.”  
—EXODUS vii. 9.

THE world has certain rights in reference to the Church. The world is at liberty to call upon the Church to prove its inspiration. It is not enough for any Church to say that it can work miracles; it must prove the saying by the action. Christianity is the great miracle-working power. Christianity never does anything but miracles. The mischief is that we have affixed to the term “miracle” a narrow signification, and have declared that miracles have ceased. This is a profound misconception. The presence of Christianity in the world is itself a miracle. Every man who is turned from darkness to light is a living miracle. Every life that is turned round from going in one direction to going in another direction illustrates the miraculous energy of Christian inspiration. It is better to show living miracles than to



be clever in logical arguments. The world is not to be convinced by controversy, but by the higher kind of miracles,—change of spirit, temper, disposition, purpose ; that change is known by the Scriptural name “regeneration,” or the new birth—a name which ought never to be surrendered ; there is none like it for range and expressiveness. Even if the world can show miracles of its own, there must be a point of superiority in Christian miracles which will instantly and finally decide the competition. Never disallow the power of education or of social custom to work certain wonders in human character and purpose. Nothing is to be gained by such denial. Such denial would, indeed, be unjust. The power of Christianity is to transcend such wonders by sublimer miracles.

*Joseph Parker, D.D.*

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## IX. GOD FIRST.

“And the Lord said unto Moses, Rise up early in the morning, and stand before Pharaoh.”—EXODUS viii. 20.

GOD is always before men. However early we rise, God is waiting for us. The Lamb was slain from before the foundation of the world. We never can surprise God by a new necessity, or baffle Him by the agony of an unexpected pain. The Church should take a lesson from this consideration. It should watch the movements of men, and always be ahead of them and waiting for them, and surprise them by Christian appeals where such appeals are least expected. The Church cannot begin its labours too early in the day. The message from heaven is always in time and in place. Every engagement of life may be legitimately interrupted by the direct messages of heaven. The Church has been too particular in studying the convenience of the persons to whom it has been sent in the name of heaven. Interrupt everything that the Gospel may be delivered. Have no fear of the greatest ; whatever is importance in life is transcended by the importance of messages that are sent by God Himself.

*Joseph Parker, D.D.*

## X. NEW DAYS.

"This month shall be unto you the beginning of months : it shall be the first month of the year to you."—EXODUS xii. 2.

God is the ruler of time. We do not invent years and months and weeks. These are really, when searched into, the creations and appointments of the Divine Power. New days are new opportunities. New days enable us to forget the evil of all yesterdays. Consider the dawning year in this light, and the opening day. The true birthday of a man is the day on which his soul was born into a purer and nobler life. A birthday may be determined by a vow. The birthday of the body is the poorest of all anniversaries. When the great idea entered the mind, inspiring and ennobling it, and filling it with Divine enthusiasm, the man was truly born. We are entitled to date our existence from our regeneration, otherwise our memory might become an intolerable torment. Regeneration destroys the recollections of remorse. Man is breaking a Divine ordinance when he goes beyond the day of his re-creation, and insists upon making alive again all the iniquities that corrupted and degraded his earliest life. Beautiful is the word *beginning*. It is one of the first words in the Bible. God Himself alone could have invented that word. It is a dewy term ; it is tender with the brightness of morning ; it is beautiful with the bloom of Heaven ; a very holy and most helpful word. Blessed is the man who knows he has begun his life again, and who can confidently date his best existence from a point in time which separates him from every evil and accusing memory.

*Joseph Parker, D.D.*

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# *I. Sermons.*

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## I. THE JEWS.

BY THE RIGHT REV. FREDERICK TEMPLE, D.D., BISHOP  
DESIGNATE OF LONDON.\*

“For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?”—ROM. xi. 15.

THESE words express the hope entertained by St. Paul of the ultimate solution of what was, in his eyes, a strange and mysterious puzzle—the refusal of the Jews to enter the Church of Christ. The Apostle, more perhaps than any other writer in the New Testament, always shows himself deeply impressed with the lessons of experience. To his own experience of conversion he turns when he would explain the character and process of the great change whereby the Christian passes from death to life. To experience he appeals when he would convince his readers that the law could not give a man the righteousness required by God, and that to live under the law had not made, and could not make, men God’s children. To experience he appeals when he would prove his apostleship, urging that his own success was a seal of his mission, and that if he were not an Apostle to others, he was, at

\* Preached in St. Paul’s for the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. .

any rate, an Apostle to those whom he had converted. That God had intended to bring the Gentiles to the kingdom of His Son, was plain to him from many reasons, but, above all, from this patent fact, that thousands upon thousands of the Gentiles had already come in, and there seemed no apparent limit to the spread of the truth among them, or to its power over their souls and lives. And yet there stood before him one unquestioned fact which seemed to run counter to all this argument, and even to turn it against himself. For it was undeniable that while the Gospel was daily making fresh conquests among the Gentiles, God's chosen people were standing outside, and after centuries of possession were surrendering to others their birthright. It had not been always so. When the Gospel was preached after the day of Pentecost the Jews had been brought in by thousands at a time. The trammels of the system in which they had been educated had not prevented a great company of priests from being converted to the faith. Believers were added to the Lord daily; multitudes both of men and women. "They ate their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favour with all the people." All this was changed, and the date of the change is the preaching of St. Stephen, St. Paul's precursor. From the day that the first hint was given that the Gospel of Christ was something larger than the Law of Moses, from the day that it was first taught that the Gentiles would be put on a level with the Jews, all this favour and welcome began to pass away, and the Jews became the bitterest persecutors of those whom at first they had magnified with enthusiastic acceptance. It was the teaching of St. Paul and of St. Paul's especial doctrine that had cast them out. It was his own special work that had done the mischief. That

very success which, when he looked at the Gentiles, encouraged him in the midst of difficulty, was marred in a capital point. Nay, it might be said that his success was no success at all, for he had purchased the admission of the Gentiles by the exclusion of the Jews. It was not only a mystery, it was inexpressibly painful to contemplate—how painful to the Apostle we can see by the passionate exclamation, quite unparalleled in the Bible, with which he begins his examination of the strange fact. He even declares that he would wish to give up his own salvation if thereby he could bring in his countrymen, for whom his very heart yearns, for whom he suffers continual sorrow. But strange and mysterious as the fact was, he could not deny it, nor explain it away. The *chosen people* stayed outside ; the Gentiles found the way in, but *they* missed it. This had been foreshadowed indeed in their own law and their own prophets. It was not difficult to point precisely to the mistake which had misled them. There were some among them, a remnant like the seven thousand worshippers of Jehovah, in the days of Elijah, who had embraced the Cross ; but after all this was said, it still remained very strange that the people who had received the gift and the favour of God, should be cast away. It is when he has come to this point that the Apostle gives his own solution of the puzzle in the eleventh verse of the eleventh chapter, which stands a little before the text that I have chosen : “I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall ? God forbid : but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy. Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles ; how much more their fulness ?”

It is to the principle contained in those words and the

application of that principle to the work undertaken by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel that I wish to ask your attention this morning. And the principle, as I understand it, is this—that on the one hand in all such Divine work the hindrances, the obstacles, the perils, the delays are all of them parts of the very process by which the work is done. And on the other hand the final success of the work—nay, every measure of such success—will bring with it a Divine crown of blessing sufficient to prove that the work is God's. The rejection of the Jews for a time was needed for the good of the Church, for the progress of the Gospel, for the interests of the truth. The Apostle does not develop his own thought; but we, when we look back on this wonderful history, may well ask ourselves whether we cannot see more than one advantage which the Catholic Church has gained by the rejection of the Jews. Would it have been possible to give to the Church its spiritual and catholic character, if at the very beginning there had been established at its centre a mass of believers in the old traditions, imbued with the preciseness, the formalism, the peculiar superstitions of the pharisaical teaching? Would it have been possible to bring in the Gentiles at all if they had had to face the unwillingness of the prior converts to admit them on equal terms, if, although the Apostles preached that circumcision was needless, the great mass of Christians felt, and showed that they felt, that circumcision was better than uncircumcision? Would the spirit of the Mosaic Law have superseded its letter, if the great body of the faithful, with all the preponderance which priority gives, had still maintained the letter in their own lives and in their relations with their new brethren? It does not seem a far-fetched inference to say that the spirituality and



catholicity of the Church was preserved by that exclusion of the Jews which wrung St. Paul's heart. Their rejection was necessary for our admission. But when the day of their redemption has come and gone—whether that redemption be by a slow process of absorption, as seems most probable, or by one of those sudden national movements of which history is not without examples, that day, saith St. Paul, shall be “Like life from the dead.” No figure short of this can he use to describe the gain which the Church would win if the chosen people of yore were once more bodily within the fold. To have once more the deep religiousness, the extraordinary sense of God's nearness and power, the recognition of God's hand in all that happens; to have these special gifts of the old Hebrew race once more living and prevailing in the Church of Christ, what would it be but “life from the dead”?

Now it is never possible to compare the future, which we do not know at all, nor the present, which we only half know, with the past, which we read by the light of its own consequences. When we look at the work which the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel is doing, is there not a parallel to be seen between the fact that is before our eyes and that which once startled St. Paul? We, too, have before us the wonderful fact, that our Lord died for all mankind, and yet His Gospel is still unknown now, more than eighteen hundred years after His death, to the great majority of the human race. Is it not strange that so many millions should be still outside? Is it not strange that the merchant should have been allowed to anticipate the missionary, and the exploring adventurer should have gone to satisfy his curiosity where the Gospel of God hath not yet gone to save the souls of men? Is

it not strange that the harvest should be so exceedingly plenteous, and the labourers so exceedingly few? If it almost staggered St. Paul to see the Jews excluded, how much more should it stagger us to see, so to speak, the whole of mankind excluded? When we reflect that for all these millions the Lord of Glory died, how can we explain the mystery that He has not completed His own work, but has left them out till now? Should we not have expected that man would have discovered the surface of the earth in the endeavour to make known the Cross, not that we should be called to preach the Cross by having first discovered the surface of the earth? Does not the state of the world seem to give weight to the argument that the Gospel, after all, is not so catholic as humanity? Does it not belie the argument which is founded on the success of the truth? It is so, brethren; and we can no more deny that this is a strange and almost inexplicable puzzle, than could St. Paul deny the same of the rejection of the Jews. Can we give any solution of it all? We cannot pretend to do more than look at the facts that we see, and learn what lesson we can from those facts. And we see that it has pleased God to marry the light of heavenly truth to the light of earth by truth, and to give the possession of the one where He has given possession of the other. In the Christian nations beyond all others flourish the sciences which study God's works side by side with the science which studies God's Word. To the Christians hath God given the supremacy in the arts of life, in the machinery of government, in the cultivation of literature. To the Christian, above all others, has it pleased Him to give the wealth and the power which belong to this present world—fearful snares if we use them ill, and precious talents if we use them well. Can

this be without a purpose ? He who believes not in God's government of the world may find here no more than a coincidence ; but the student of the ways of Providence feels sure that there must be some deep-founded reason why the Gospel should be kept within its hitherto narrow limits while it was gradually conquering the intellect of the more cultivated races, penetrating ever deeper and deeper, with a strange and subtle insinuation, into all law and all art, and all government and all literature. Whatever may be said of the opposition between science and religion, there stands the plain fact that the scientific nations are the Christian nations, and that when the people of God go forth to preach the long-delayed message to the world, they find nowhere among the people whom they visit their equals in secular knowledge, or in all that flows from the possession of that knowledge. And can we deny that the message that we give is simpler and purer and the more effective on this ground ? Is it not a great gain that before going to preach to others we should have outgrown many superstitions and many mistakes ourselves ? Has not the progress of knowledge, which is assuredly God's gift, made our interpretation of the Bible and our use of the Bible simpler and clearer, and more spiritual ? If we had but the zeal of the mediæval missionaries, have we not the means of doing far more than they could do ? It seems as if God had ordained that the perpetual study of His works should always react on the study of His word ; and as if all light should be made the handmaid of religion ; and as if He had kept us back from going to the nations of the world until we had learnt our own lessons with more accuracy and clearness. Imagine the cases reversed ! Imagine the Gospel preached to us from people in a lower state of

culture ! Imagine the less cultivated Christian nations endeavouring to teach the more cultivated ! Could we receive the Gospel at their hands ? Could we learn the truth from men who brought it wrapped up in foolish and silly superstitions ? Would it be possible, for instance, that Europe, as Europe now is, should receive the Gospel from Abyssinia, as Abyssinia now is ? Yes, even if they had the very truth itself, but that truth mixed and marred with demonstrable falsehoods, could that truth be welcomed by our understanding if so presented to us for the first time ?

And now, brethren, I do not say for one moment that this is the whole account of the matter, but what I insist upon is, that whenever we are disposed to be daunted by watching the slow progress of the Gospel, the answer is, that such delays are to be looked on simply as parts of the process of God ; and in this particular instance it may well be that it was His pleasure to require His Church to begin the conquest over the intellect of men, and over the products of that intellect, before going forth to conquer the human race itself. But, of course, if this be true as far as it goes, I must add it is yet but a portion of the truth. There may be other reasons which we cannot see, but which posterity will see, and they may learn in fuller measure than we can learn, that the casting away until now of the great peoples of Asia and Africa are the riches of the Church, and the diminishing of *them* the riches of mankind.

That there is a purpose in delays and obstacles is one-half of the principle that St. Paul asserts, and the other half is the gain that accompanies every success ; and as the one is a consolation when we are discouraged, so is the other a perpetual encouragement when we are labour-

ing. Nothing is more sure than the reaction of all extension of the truth of God. The very endeavour to give the heavenly message to others engraves that message more deeply on our own hearts. The very condition of vigorous spiritual health at home is the attempt to kindle that life abroad. We may not be able to trace the immediate results of every fresh conquest ; we may not be able to reap as we are sowing ; but the harvest of God is sure if it be slow, and what the Church sows that shall it also reap.

This day we received in this cathedral an offering of affection sent by the Church of America to the Church of England. Long shall we prize this token of their communion with us, and hand it down to our successors to be treasured for the sake of the givers. It is more to us than a present. It speaks to us of the blessing of God on the labours of our fathers. It tells us of the warm affection that will assuredly follow on all our extensions of the knowledge of the Gospel. It tells us that our own spiritual life shall be richer by the life that we communicate. Let us look forward, as St. Paul did, to the end. Let us picture to ourselves what it will be to the Church of Christ when the nations of the world shall at last come in, and the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. Let us imagine the whole earth at last become Christian. Will it not give an indescribable strength and power to the religious life of mankind that all men should profess one religion ? Assuredly the inevitable result of such an end of our labours would be that the moral and spiritual standard of mankind would shoot upwards to a marvellous height. I am not supposing—I know not that we have any right to anticipate, that all men shall be Christians in deed, as

well as Christians in profession—I know not that we have any warrant for hoping that as the Church shall spread till it covers the world, so carelessness of life, and lack of faith, and the profligacy of the wicked and the impiety of the reckless shall disappear ; but suppose only that all mankind profess the Gospel in the same sense in which the nations of Europe profess it now, what figure could we use to describe the consequences, but that which St. Paul uses in the parallel instance, “What shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead ?” Assuredly when that day comes, it shall be almost like a renewal of the spring of life ; like a return to the strength and zeal of apostolic times, to find all men everywhere acknowledging the Cross ; to find no other religion professed on any shore but the religion of the Lord ; to find the whole human race united in one grand confession. How certain will that be to make the Gospel broader and deeper ! How surely will the living and essential rise above the mechanical and the accidental ! How petty national prejudices and narrow blindnesses will disappear before the one universal voice ! What strength will be given to faith ; what calmness, what keenness of discrimination, what intercourse of spiritual affection, what communion of spiritual life, may be expected to grow up out of the one profession of faith ! And then shall every Church own its debt of gratitude to every other, and each shall learn lessons of the other in the day when all nations shall confess the one Lord. It is far off yet. God works slowly, and that very slowness is but another proof that the work is His. At first sight it often seems that the most convincing proof of the presence of His hand is when He does the work of a thousand years in one day ; but a deeper reflection makes us know that a much surer



proof of His presence is when the purpose of His will, which man would limit by his own brief day, is steadily pursued through a thousand years. We may imitate in some degree the *sudden*, but the *slow* is utterly beyond our power. We can command many things, but centuries of persistent action we cannot command. Our steadily growing science may give us, by God's guidance, increased dominion over the creation in which it has pleased Him to make us lords, but no science will enable us to bind the generations to come, or ensure that others will pursue our objects when we ourselves are not. To God alone must we commit the work which transcends all duration that we can command. It is slow, but all the more it is *His*; and yet we may ever encourage ourselves as we labour in the task with the thought that the conversion of the nations shall be nothing short of "life from the dead."

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## II. CAST OFF THE WORKS OF DARKNESS.

BY THE REV. JAMES ROBERTSON, M.A., HEAD MASTER OF  
HAILEYBURY COLLEGE.\*

"Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness."—ROM. xiii. 12.

In this great abbey of yours, this sublime and historic building, the symbol of a great nation's faith, the shrine of a great people's affections, which has grown in glory with their growth, which has clasped their living multitudes in its embrace, and has taken home the mightiest of their dead to rest within its lap, there is nothing more striking to the imagination of an occasional visitor than the kind

\* Preached in Westminster Abbey November 30th, 1884.

of living ring with which it always seems—from every shaft and monument, from each soaring arch and delicate tracery-bar—to respond to every mood and aspiration of the worshippers that throng its hallowed pavement. As the sky gathers up the vapours from earth beneath to restore them to it again in fertilizing showers, so these very groinings and vaultings above our heads seem here to catch the passing cry or colour of the assembled crowd, and of the great Church or the great empire that they represent, in all its varying changes; the triumph of exultation, the deep calm of peace, the throb of suspense, and the broken accents of penitence, the shrill wail of lamentation; and these the spirit of the abbey sheds back again—not indeed as a bare reiteration or reflection of the joys and sorrows, the hopes and fears of those human hearts, but mingled now with something of a new and wondrous element, with distant echo of angelic symphony, with message borne on the Iris-wing of rays let slip from the golden gates of heaven. And so in virtue of this benign sympathy through the procession of the centuries with all the hosts of the great city that have passed from birth to death within their ken, these walls seem to stand as no mere inanimate pile of earthly craftsman's handiwork, but rather as being for England what the haunted oak of Dodona was for Greece—at once the living recipient, or the interpreter to the court of Heaven, of all the half-articulate passion cries of earth, and also the accredited oracle to the children of men to reveal the secret counsels of the stars in their courses.

Surging, as it seemed to me, with such a living pulse of awful gladness, I have seen here on a Trinity Sunday the first true welcome of the summer sun, while it flooded with rainbow hues the silent multitude below. Then

presently the uplifted strain of "Holy, Holy, Holy," sent a thrill of adoring exultation through these old grey stones ; stones that have for so many generations borne their own tongueless but eloquent testimony to the supreme majesty of the ineffable Name. And yet again, amid the dim, sad mists of Passion week, have the same grand old walls seemed to clothe themselves in sober array, keeping watch and ward while the hour of darkness closed in upon the stricken heart of that Master whom they have loved so long and served so loyally.

So now, upon this Advent day, you stand within the Valhalla of your country's fame, the carven treasure-house of your country's creed, and once more the man whose eyes are opened may find each sombre thought forestalled, each trembling aspiration crystallized, even ere well uttered, into some marble symbol, each high resolve embodied in some adamant column, and all the vista along the perspective of the coming centuries projected for him visually through receding arch and firmamental gloom. The very towers, looming in the darkness as you approach them from your homes, have already first taken up the tale, and have proclaimed themselves as of one spirit with your devout intention. For is not this the fact, that you come here to-night at the behest of no mere workaday calendar, but to mark the inauguration of a new Christian year by some different reckoning from that almanack in which the busy world registers its fever and its fret ? The months shall pass with the same names, yet for you with another face. Below the troubled current of the year of trade and turmoil shall run another and an under current of the life that is hid with Christ, that calls the recurring seasons by His names, and counts their progress by the epochs of the story of His Gospel and the annals of His Church. And

I say, even in like manner, in like spirit with your own, when you leave for an hour the interminable hum and the bewildering labyrinth of your great Babylon, and set your faces towards the towers that draw your footsteps hither, you find them still standing—as for ages they have stood—the silent witnesses, with this very stamp upon their foreheads, the stamp of Advent Sunday, the visible protest amid all the rack and din of multitudinous life, that the fleeting hours as they perish, and are set down to our account, shall be named with the name, not of the world, but of Christ, and marked upon the dial, not of time, but of eternity.

Then presently, when you have entered these doors, and as your heart-service joins with a thousand living fellow-voices in the aspirations and the dedications of the day, there mingles with it perforce the resonance of reawakened and unquenchable harmonies,—the unearthly antiphon of the mighty dead. “Cast away the works of darkness, now in the time of this mortal life.” “He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.” “Acceptable in His sight; acceptable in His sight.” It is no mere breath of living wight that leads your prayers and services in this oracular shrine. It is the awful voice of the myriad-throated spirits of the past, led by the choir of kings and conquerors, of patriots and poets and divines, of those that have wrought their work, and have entered into the fruit of their labours. What meed they may have won we know not. What warranty or reversal of their earthly fame we cannot guess. This they have no commission from Heaven to tell us. But one mission and one message at least they *have* to deliver to us; nor does it cease for one moment to pulse and beat upon our ears, “Cast away the works of darkness, now in the time of this mortal life.

In our lives we scorned them—cast them away! In the grave they profit not—cast them away!”

And one, at least, who leads that grave company, Edward, king and confessor, that built, or rebuilt, this temple eight hundred years ago, gives edge to his warning by shrewd example, as he points to the treasure of Dane-gelt, wrung from the blood and toil of suffering subjects. He sees a demon dancing in glee on the caskets of ill-gotten gain, and he recoils at the unhallowed sight. “Away with it!” he cries; “restore, release! Away with the fruit of rapine and oppression! I will none of it! The works of darkness—away with them all!” And again the cry re-echoes, as century after century takes it up, till a thousand who have fought their own good fight, and laid their bones to rest beside you there, are calling anew to us, their living sons, “Cast them away, cast them away!”

It is, indeed, no common ground whereon we stand. It is a weird thing to come and offer our Advent vows or breathe our adoration in such a consecrated place as this. There is, perforce, a “gathered intensity” in the air; there is an awful sanction for good or evil added to our every thought, our every utterance, within these walls; a fresh glory, an electric charge of new strength to every earnest and manly heart; a new condemnation to every indifferent or time-serving spirit; a very savour of life unto life, or of death unto death.

You remember the story of Harold, when he took oath to Norman William that he would support his claim to England’s throne? He swore that oath with a false-hearted reservation; for the chair whereon he sat covered, as he thought, but common relics for which he had small reverence. But when his oath was sworn, and the cloth of gold uplifted, lo! there lay, beneath the rest, a goodly store of

hallowed things, whose bond, so men then deemed, was a hundredfold more binding in Heaven's sight; store of godly bones of purest saint and holiest martyr. That oath he broke, and sealed his speedy doom.

“The curse is on him  
For swearing falsely by those blessed bones.”

Even so (though we may cast aside the superstition of the tale), even so we now come here, perchance to raise some half-hearted Advent prayer, to serve the Judge of the quick and the dead with some indolent “Amen” of customary acquiescence, when, behold! on a sudden these tombs stand for a moment open, and the bones of the men who have made England what she is, who have made us what we are,—if indeed we are worthy of them at all,—cry shame on our disloyalty. Had we indeed forgotten that we were compassed about with such a cloud of witnesses? Had we dared to lisp in languor and indifference concerning life and death and judgment to come in the very midst of that choir of voices which God has permitted to touch our ears to-day from where they stand and wait upon the other side? Awake, sleepers, awake! and fling away the night-swathings of the darkness. It is not the dead that slumber, but the living. Not now be yours the night-gear of repose, still less the wine-cup or the delights of dalliance, but rather the armament of the dawning battle-day, the bright harness of the wakeful warrior.

But even though I should set all these aside, yet one thing I may not leave alone, and that is, to complete the one verse of my text: “And let us put on the armour of light.” Assuredly if any man try to preach on the words, “Let us cast away the works of darkness,” alone, and by themselves, he will be but a blind leader of the blind. For by no way in the world, by no charm of magic, or



audacity of sheer will, can either darkness or its works be got rid of, other than by this—that you flood the gloom itself with light. If you are shut up in a dark chamber, you cannot sweep the black darkness away with any busy broom, you cannot peel it off from the walls, or wash it out by groping at it with a futile mop. One thing only will help you, and that is, to fling open door and shutter and window and let in the white beams of Heaven, or else, at the least, to kindle the lamp of your vigil swiftly, and bid it burn unceasingly. In some form you must court the light.

And this is in itself a hopeful and a blessed thought. In a vast city like this our intractable wilderness of London, when we dwell only upon the gathering blackness, a thick darkness that may be felt, when we think only of the growing thousands added year by year to its crowds, of the masses of ignorance and vice, of poverty and pain, on the one hand, and, it may be, of luxury and ease, of self-indulgence and self-seeking, on the other,—as long as we brood over these dread shadows by themselves, and wonder whereunto they will grow, and what earthly effort can withstand or dispel them, no natural energy of spirit can possibly bear up against the feeling of oppression, of absolute despair, which the mere contemplation of them must quickly engender. In vain would seem all our passionate wishes, in vain our most earnest Advent prayers that we and our huge city might cast away the works of darkness, or the darkness of the works, were it not for the sequel of our Epistle and of our Collect, the petition and the hope that we may “put upon us the armour of light.” In the strength of that aspiration we may dare to turn our gaze again upon the dead monotony of the blackness, and now our eyes of faith are illumined

to see a very different sight. Darkness still, but spangled now with ten thousand stars twinkling and struggling bravely in luminous array, churches and missions, hospitals and schools, societies and meetings, and scores of thousands of single loyal spirits, that sparkle each in its own little circle brightly enough; and yet more stars continually bursting into visible place, till hope revives again, that they will yet prevail to hold their own unquenched, and grow to a galaxy that shall maintain even the fortress of darkness in its keeping, till anon the dawn shall dart its first rays over the eastern horizon.

And of these stars, or nebulous clusters of stars, each means, if we look closer, some heart or hearts that, having the lamps of their own vigil brightly trimmed, have thereby enough and to spare to illuminate the pathway of their neighbours; or else they have already put on the very armour of light. For although that "armour of light" in our Epistle means first such panoply as the battle of the wakeful daylight demands, yet if ever there be clothing of lustrous greave and corslet that, like the unclothed purity of Spenser's Una, can "make a sunshine in that shady place," then it is this self-luminous armour of God. It is not hereafter only, but here on earth that "the righteous shall shine as the stars of heaven."

Let us then put on the armour of light, and display it. Or if we cannot yet fare forth as proven knights,

"Ycladde in mighty arms and silver shield,"

let us at least take each his little lamp, and trim it truly. Each man and woman in this vast congregation is a separate centre of light, shedding brightness, and even warmth, cheerfully, loyally, persistently, unceasingly round an ever-widening circle to his life's end,—and what a grand force

we have here already for the discomfiture of the powers of evil that beset our city or our country ! Keep we but our hold on this ; be we but true all round to our own share of the light, whether as watchers through the night, or as combatants of the dawn, true to the one torch entrusted to our care to cherish and dispense, or the one flashing blade that has been fitted to our hand, and we may well hope to meet the powers of darkness, not only with defiance, but defeat. And on this day, when the call of Advent mingles with the call of Andrew to his brother, let this thought also reassure each one of us—that he is no solitary sentinel, no single-handed champion, but rather one of a sworn brotherhood.

“ A glorious company, the flower of men,  
To serve as model for the mighty world,  
And be the fair beginning of a time.”

There is, indeed, no other way to get rid of darkness but by ushering in or welcoming the light. When the statesman of whose life and loss England has lately thought and heard so much, first met with the calamity that doomed his sight for ever, brave though he was, yet even his bold spirit was crushed for a time, and his shrinking soul shared the darkness of the eyes. He remained for a season as one stunned, even too much for passive resignation. It was the light of hope let in upon his prison house by the loving sympathy of an old and wise friend that scattered the clouds within his soul, the inner light of hope and love that nerved him quickly with the spirit to rise and walk, and go forth in resolute action to brave and to benefit the world.

Cast away the works of darkness ! Yes ; but casting away the rubbish will not of itself build the wall. And in this case we cannot even have the desire to cast away the

rubbish, till we have seen something of the light, something of the motive and the vision of that new Jerusalem, which we aspire to build, whether in our own souls, or in the heart of our native land. We cannot, either in ourselves or in others, banish sin except by supplanting it with goodness ; we cannot cease to love self except by process of loving Christ and Christ's little ones more ; we cannot make the outcast cease from degradation except by importing the materials of self-respect ; we cannot render rotting homes healthy except by building clean ones on their site ; we can in no way dispel greed and lies and lust save by learning and teaching the loveliness of purity and truth. To banish an unworthy object of affection, you must displace it with a better. To win from debasing amusements and excitements, you must furnish wholesome stimulus and interests. To dislodge Satan, you must fight in the ranks with Michael and his angels. Light alone can do battle with the powers of darkness. He that is the light of the world can alone arm us to disperse or crush them.

Such is the spirit in which we must, one and all of us, go back to-night into the heart of the busy world, determined, by God's grace, to keep our own lamps burning, and the sheen of our own armour bright, and so to let our light shine before men, that they may, through us, be led to glorify our Father. And for ourselves, for our own souls, if indeed we love the darkness better than the light, because our deeds are evil, then there is no more to be said. Vainly has the spirit of the abbey warned us ; vainly have called those voices of the dead. But if not ; if ever we have once awaked, once truly breathed that prayer, "Lead, kindly Light, lead Thou me on," assuredly we shall not be left without some ray to walk by and to

watch by. Then presently our own little lamp shall be kindled by that heavenly fire, and then anon, as we prove our steps and try our limbs, our lamp shall be changed perhaps for a flaming sword, and our oil-flask for a silver shield, the sword of the Spirit and the shield of faith, and we shall at last be deemed worthy to go forth arrayed in the whole bright panoply of the knights of Christ, wearing His own cross upon our foreheads, and His own victory in our hearts.

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## *II. Outline Sermons.*

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### THE COMMANDMENT IS EXCEEDING BROAD.

ABSTRACT OF THE FAREWELL SERMON BY THE BISHOP DESIGNATE  
OF LINCOLN.\*

“I see that all things come to an end, but Thy commandment is exceeding broad.”—PSALM cxix. 96.

MANY of you will recognise this text, for it is one on which I have spoken before. But I am not therefore going to give you what is called an old sermon. For it is characteristic of the Bible that its old stories have ever new meanings, and its words have a sense that is progressive with events. No one who has not known the loss of father or mother can realize the full grasp with which, on waking with a feeling of a void, we repeat “Our Father.” In the same way, this text has been my companion for many years; it is an old friend. Things and circumstances change; my preaching here at St. Barnabas, in the old familiar way at least, is at an end. “But yet the commandment is exceeding broad.”

\* Preached at St. Barnabas Church on Sexagesima Sunday, February 8th.

That has been my help during my twelve years here. I have had some sorrows, but five or six firm footholds have one by one revealed themselves to me, and they rise simply from the idea of duty. Duty is the first step ; and duty means three things. We have the sense of knowing right and wrong ; we have, too, the sense of responsibility for doing the right when we know it ; and we have in contrast to these the freedom to do either the right or the wrong. Let us learn a lesson here from the story of Ananias. He was free to give or not to give ; only he wished to do as other Christians did, to be up to the mark ; as we should say to be "Churchy." But the Church is the Church of the Spirit of God, and, therefore, Ananias lied to God. Yet don't be afraid ; do the whole duty, and God will take care of you. The next step after duty is conscience. It is worth more than all money, more than all knowledge, more than all honours to believe in conscience as the voice of God. And that leads us on to the third step, God ; for conscience cannot be accounted for naturally, it is not part of one's own brain system, but is from God Himself. So one believes, and so we believed in the childhood to which one's thoughts are taken back by the letters sent me just of late by many dear early friends. And after God comes Revelation, for humanity's close hold on a personal God is due to His Revelation of Himself—Theism is only protected by Christianity. True, God makes Himself known in other ways ; the whole world is bound to Him by golden chains. Nature and reason are, as it were, pipes to convey to us as channels the oil of the grace of God ; but man had twisted the pipes, and the channels had half lost their use. The best intellectual contributions to religion are beautiful indeed, but they are only idols, if of silver and of gold, of the best possible of the materials. All else is incommensurable with the needs of man, save only the Revelation of one God in Three Persons. And next the sum of the Revelation is Christ, the secret in the bosom of the Father before the worlds were made known ; not at first, for man was



not capable of receiving it, but as soon as man was ready for the knowledge. Better than all study is it to know Christ, the Way by Whom man is to return to God. Lastly, Christ gives us His Church, the divine institution of man's needs ; Catholic, not in place only, but in the fulness of her truth ; Holy, for she tells us of the means whereby the blood of Christ is to be applied to man ; One, for in her we attain unity in love, communion with the saints in God, and communion with God Himself.

These have been my supports in life, and at Oxford I have been learning new meaning in each of them. Each is drawn on from the one before, and so originally from Duty from the "commandment." But what is duty ? It resolves itself into love : the ten Commandments are the law of the love of God and of the love of man. Therefore be very watchful about love. It is our best gift, and so the devil tries his hardest to destroy it ; he comes in the raiment of love, but of love that is not truly love, but lust. Lust is narrow, selfish, hardening crust. Love opens our eyes to see with clear vision ; "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Love is ever widening its circles, all embracing ; it is "exceeding broad." It enables us to see something good, alike in poor and rich, in educated and ignorant : it gives us a perception of beauty that would otherwise be hid. And Lent, which is just coming on us, should be a time for special guard about love and purity of heart.

But one characteristic there is of love ; it is suffering and self-sacrificing. Such was the love of the apostles and martyrs, such the love of the Lord Himself. "As I have loved you" ; "Having loved His own, He loved them unto the end" ; that is, unto His cross. Purity enables us to love, but love must entail suffering ; our hearts must be wrung once or twice, it may be, in our lifetime, if we would be unlike Ananias, if we would keep back nothing, and would give up all to Christ.

Only do not be afraid ; the command and the love are alike

God's, He will take care of us. What His "commandment" is for each of us we may not understand, but we know that it is the definite expression of His will; and we know that His will is that all men should be saved, that all should come to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus.

What then does love imply for ourselves—what, though I scarcely dare to-night to speak of it, for our nation? Our countrymen are in danger, ourselves are criticised; yet perhaps all our troubles may have, even politically, a direct result. Perhaps central Africa may be opened to us, with its hundreds of thousands that know not Christ, steeped in ignorance and sin. Only we must not fail to remember the truth expressed in the words of the great bishop who ordained me here. Speaking at Liverpool, he said: "I thought as I looked on that great arm of the sea which I saw to-day as it sparkled in the sunshine and rippled with the western wind; I thought that if it were all filled with ships of war, and swept with cannon, yet is it not written, 'Except the Lord keep the city'? and what can the people do, on whom He looks in anger?" There are besides the armies of earth, angel squadrons round about us, and there are the mighty forces of prayer. Therefore, above all let England be true to England's mission, to keep the faith in purity, and to spread it in love—to love Christ, not to wrangle about Him—but to lift up the Cross to the nations; and then the God of Wisdom and the God of Battles shall preserve our soul, and enable us, as we have received from our fathers, so to hand on to our children not only the lower gifts of prosperity and abundance, but the greater gifts of purity and love.

One word before I cease of thankfulness to this parish, for I and all the University have much to thank it for. I pray that God may keep the clergy without wavering and without fear, true to the Church of England as she is true to the Church Catholic of Christ. And to you, dear people, faithful thanks for the evidence you have borne of the reality of Christianity.

Rightly is your church St. Barnabas, and rightly are the members of the University here, for it was the simple Barnabas who took Paul and brought him to the apostles ; and so this congregation will have confirmed many a University man in his Christian faith, and have helped him on by Eucharist and prayer.

Let us then take up the text, "I see that all things come to an end, but Thy commandment is exceeding broad," let us set our steps on the pathway of righteousness, for "beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace," beautiful in every land ; restless, it may be, but restless from a longing desire ever to press on and on ; restless with a divine activity, for they seek a better country ; that is, a heavenly. So it is with all those who in this spirit fulfil their daily task ; to each one the pathway of duty is divine, for it brings each nearer to the brightness of His presence. They walk with God, up to the beauty of the perfect day.

God give us courage to tread this way boldly, and grace to follow it on to its goal in Paradise.

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## THE TEACHING OF EXPERIENCE.

BY REV. JOSEPH PARKER, D.D.\*

"I have learned by experience."—GEN. xxx. 27.

THESE are Laban's words to Jacob : "I pray Thee, if I have found favour in Thine eyes, tarry ; for I have learned by experience that the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake." You think I make a bold statement when I say that experience is one of the teachers of the world, but that personal experience is one of the great failures of the ministry. This seems impossible, it is true. Does not the burnt child dread the fire ? Yes ; and goes to it again in some other place, in some other form ! Not always along the same line. You will say that

\* City Temple, London, Sunday Evening, December 30th, 1883.

experience is an infallible teacher and experience cannot fail. Experience goes for next to nothing in moral directions. It may have some influence in temporal circumstances ; though even there the failures of experience are more conspicuous than its successes. In moral life experience goes for next to nothing. You have said, "I have taken poison at this table," and you go back ere sundown and take more out of the same platter. You have said—not having read it in a book, but speaking out of experience—"This house is the way to hell"; and you have straightway taken a latch-key to enter it. We cannot be all taught by experience. There is something in us that burns out everything in us but one thing. Verily, we are a great fire, every life a fierce furnace, and we burn in it all homilies, exhortations, prayers, entreaties, ethical systems, moral maxims, experience. The fire within us will reduce them all to white ashes, and there is only one thing that can put the fire out.

Yet we may learn a good many things by experience, and turn them into philosophical speculations, and at the same time fail to apply and realize the higher lesson of the stern teacher.

"Experience," we say in an old proverb, "is a dear school," and experience is a useless school in all the higher ranges of thought, purpose, and action. Their limit is recognized and their sphere marked. The experimentalists can do a good deal, but they cannot comprehend all the point and mystery of human life. Two or three things I have learned by experience ; whether I have turned these things to profitable account is another thing. I have learned by experience that I am more than animal. I do not know well what I am. I am not as the beasts that perish. There flames up in me something almost sacred. Sometimes I am shut up with the angels in prayer, and we seem to speak a new mother-tongue ; sometimes I see the invisible ; sometimes a voice says within me, "Thou art made in the image and likeness of God." It is something to have learned to discard the merely animal side

of the being, to say to the dog, "I am not thy kin"; and to say to the eagle, whose broad pinions darken the air above, "I am not of thy family." There is a spirit in man of the inspiration of the Almighty.

I am not now attempting to define man by some words or phrase that shall be an equivalent to his nature. I am simply saying that I have learned by experience that I do not belong to the sea, or forest, or firmament. "You are made out of the dust." "I know that." "Of the earth, earthy." "Yes." "Made to die." "No! no! *that* I was not made to do." That thing which is within me—call it what you will, better call it by what name you like—would eat up the earth, and yet be hungry; have all the stars which shine in the heavens in its treasure house, and yet be poor; would drink up all the fountains of water, and yet be athirst. Call it mind, or soul, or spark of deity, I cannot tell; but I know that it brings with it pain, fear, misery; joy, hope, liberty. That I have learned by experience. I may have wanted to be something else. I might have enlarged my lower liberty, if I could have contracted my higher freedom. With less soul I might have had more body. Without this inward thing called soul, I might have had my pranks with the lower nature, and have made the day night, and the night sevenfold in darkness. I am not speaking of what I have read in a book, or what a prophet has told me. I have learned by experience that in this body I have an angel for a guest; a spirit dwelling within me that is above all the stature of time, and expands itself beyond all the limits of space.

I have learned by experience that it is possible to know much that is good, and yet do much that is bad. That is the difficulty. Probably there is no man in this house who sins for want of knowledge. Ten thousand commandments would not deter him. There is no prison which God has made which can shut up the soul in worship. We can take our most learned books of experience, and lay them right in the

middle of the hot fire that is burning in the centre of our hearts. We can pass through the church—aye, through its long aisles—to reach the tempter. We can join in holy worship, we can sing the hymn of Christian music, and yet carry in us the power of sin itself. “That is impossible,” you say. “Speak for yourself.” “One experience is not all.” So you say. But these are facts as simple, clear, definite, and ascertainable as any facts in so-called physical nature; and we must deal with them. The head and the heart are not always in fellowship. They live near one another, but may have no union. The head may be a wise head, and the heart may rebel against it.

“I know the right and say the right,  
And yet the wrong pursue.”

So said an ancient poet in the Latin rhyme; and we are saying it every day in our native speech.

Tell me, one says, that other thing which cannot be burnt up in the centre of the heart. Did I say “cannot be burnt up”? May I amend the expression without changing the substance of my meaning? I would put it in a more affirmative form in relation to its own power. There is another force which can put the fire out. You will be surprised to hear the old, old words—the precious blood of Christ, the Lamb slain from the foundations of the world. You see the extremity of the disaster, and you see the extremity of the remedy. You cannot have death held by some superficial appliance; you cannot have high treason blown away with a complimentary word. There is nothing within the measure of your manhood that can spread itself over all human guilt but the blood of Jesus Christ, which cleanseth from all sin. I have learned by experience that moral argument will never save a man; a man cannot be saved by proverbs. This is heart-dealing, this is salvation, not amendment, not reform, not rearrangement—but redemption.

So, then, we must not change our mottoes, we must change



our spirit ; we must not merely amend our outward relations, we must have our motive ennobled and inspired and sanctified. The motive determines everything. I have nothing to do with the action. The action may enshrine a motive that will rule it even in the sanctuary of God. We must look into purposes, meanings. "Create within me a clean heart, O God, and renew in me a right spirit." That is something which penalty can never do. No man is regenerated by punishment. Regeneration is the work, the miracle of God. Search me, try me, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the path, the way everlasting. This is fundamental talk. The man who so speaks is the only one who gets hold of every age, and deals with every soul essentially. Do not let us disguise this matter. Years are flying away, and we have no time for idle speculation. The man who says, "The whole head is sick, the whole body is faint," is the only man who has the key of the situation.

Experience may lead a man to despair. Experience says, "I have learned that this lamp cannot be lighted by me." Christ says, "But it can be lighted by *Me*." Experience says, "This ground will grow nothing but weeds and useless matter." Christ says, "I can dig it, and purify it, and enrich it, and sow it with seed that shall bring forth precious and abundant fruit." What we cannot do Christ can do. My young friends, if any are attempting to teach you by experience, remember that experience can teach you nothing in morals except that which is negative. You need positive instruction. Experience can teach you that the way of transgressors is hard ; experience can teach you that figs do not grow on thistles. That is all. Experience can teach you that there is no water here. Where do the waters rise ? Oh, where ? Experience can send you into despair. That is the function of experience. But you need divine instruction, sympathy, and teaching, to be taken by the hand and led the right way, which terminates in the Paradise of God. This you may have

in Christ and Christian teaching. That is the inspiration of God. Now I call you to testify what has experience taught you? Only negative things. I mean experience out of Christ, experience of time and sense. Experience—has it enriched you and filled your mind? It is not in anything measurable to fill that which is immeasurable. The size of the mind must determine that which must be given to it for its satisfaction; and it is not, so far as we know, in the power of anything physical to minister to a mind diseased, to fill and satisfy the aching, yearning, praying soul.

Is there satisfaction in Christ? Yes. Does He truly fill the heart? To overflow! Is there no aching void behind? None! Will you have Him now? Let this night symbolise the close of time. It is the last Sabbath evening in the year. Let us look together bravely. We have had many a long communion, many a happy research into the meaning of Sacred Writ. The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and some heart may say, "And I am not saved!" The summer is *not* ended. It is harvest, it is summer. This is the day of salvation.

What a day this last Sabbath day of the year will be if we say to Jesus, "I am Thine"! May not the sunset of 1883 have the last obstinate soul say to Christ, "Lord, I believe; help Thou my unbelief, my Lord and my God!" Then would next year come with white wings, with sweet music, with a pleasant shout and a great glory on its outspread pinions. If any of you are going to be worshippers of experience, you need not despair. Once again, in Christ's name, I open the portals, and say, "Yet there is room," and we will not be content while there is an empty chair. If we can but hear one wanderer cry, "I yield, I yield," and see but one throw down the arms of rebellion, saying, "By the grace of God, I will be a better man!" That vow is an inspiration, and is never born in the human heart except by the will of God. If this is so, let the years bring what they may; they will bring

heaven nearer, they will make Christ richer and a more glorious Saviour. May the Lord take my appeal in His own hands, and in His own way do what men cannot do. Amen.

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## EPHRAIM FORSAKING IDOLS.

BY THE REV. ALEXANDER MACLAREN, D.D.\*

“Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols? I have heard him, and observed him: I am like a green fir tree. From me is thy fruit found.”—HOSEA xiv. 8.

THESE are the last words of Hosea’s prophecy. They sum up his whole hopes for his people. They are somewhat difficult of understanding, from the perplexity in which the frequent occurrence of the word “I” involves us. But it is quite clear, I think, that we have in them two speakers: “Ephraim”—that is, the personification of the kingdom of Israel—“shall say, What have I to do any more with idols?” And then there follows the answer to that word, from another speaker, and that other speaker is God.

“I have heard thee”—that abundant confession that thou madest, low, faint, and yet it has gone up. “Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols?” “I hear,” for the “*have*,” is an unnecessary addition. “I hear him, I observe him,” My eye is on him. “I am like a green” (not “*fir tree*”) “*cypress*.” The force of that metaphor I shall have to show you in a moment: “From me is thy fruit found.”

So then, here are these two voices—first, the penitent voice of the returning wanderer, then the welcoming answer of the Father. “What have I to do any more with idols?” The nation which is here represented as thus speaking, as the last point and object of the whole prophecy, is described in a former part of this remarkable book as being “joined to

\* A week-evening address preached at Union Chapel, Oxford Road, Manchester, on Wednesday, June 11th, 1884.

his idols." And now that strait band and bond that link him to his idols is snapped, and he is set free.

And, by-the-bye, though it has not much to do with my present subject, one word about that passage: "Ephraim is joined to his idols, let him alone!" I daresay you have heard, I have heard often, this altogether untrue doctrine twisted out of that, that there are states of mind so desperately given over to evil and wickedness, that God stops trying to bring that man back. There is not a word like that, that I know, anywhere in the whole Bible; and to use that passage for such a purpose is a clean perversion of a plain word of Scripture.

If anybody will take the trouble to look at the context, and not try to twist the verbal rendering, he will find that it is an exhortation to the neighbouring kingdom of Judah not to meddle with idolatry. "Do not you touch pitch, or you will be defiled; do not you touch these people that are so involved in idolatry, or they will contaminate you. Ephraim is joined to his idols, let him alone! Come out of the midst of them, and be ye clean." And no doctrine that any man, however obstinate and rooted in his evil he be, has gone so far that he has got beyond the reach of the Divine hand, or the loving pity and effort of the Divine seeking love, can be found in God's Word.

However, that is not my present point. What I want you to notice is how we get here, first of all, a wonderful expression of the perfect simplicity of a true return to God. "What have I to do any more with idols?" That is all! No paroxysms of grief, no agonies of repentance, no prescription of so much sorrow, so much grief, for so much sin; no long, tedious process; but, like the finger put upon the key here, the sound yonder.

Heard far away, the nation has only to whisper the resolve, to break away from the evil, and immediately there, in the heavens, the voice is heard. The simplicity of a true repent-

ance ; it is like that grand, majestic, simple confession, the pattern of all confessions, which we have put into the mouth of David after his great sin : "I have sinned against the Lord !" No more ; no more ! That is it.

And then there follows : "And the Lord hath made to pass from me the iniquity of my soul." Two words,—for it is only two words in the original,—two words ; *we pass* out of the evil when a man turns to God. "What have I to do any more with idols ?"

Then look for a moment,—for that is the thing that I want to refer to most this evening,—look at the answer, the echo of this confession which comes from heaven ; it is the welcoming voice of the Father, "I hear him and observe him." As to that first word, I have said perhaps enough already to absolve me from the necessity of dwelling further upon it now ; the point I want you to notice is how, instantaneously, that Divine ear, strong enough, according to the old story about the ears of the gods, to hear the grass grow, fine enough to hear the first faint shootings of the new life in a man's heart, catches the sound that is inaudible to all besides, and as soon as the word comes from the pale, penitent lip of Ephraim, the answer comes from God—"I hear him ; and if *I* hear him, that is all that is necessary. I hear him, and observe him."

There, of course, observation is used in a good sense ; the observation of the gentle, loving eye that is upon the man to watch him and to guard him ; to watch him, not as a tiger watches his prey, not that He may mark his steps and regard all his stumblings, but watching him as a nurse watches the first tottering steps of the little child that she has put down from her lap, in order that the hand may be quickly stretched out whenever they are likely to stumble, and guide whenever they are likely to go astray. The insecure, uncertain footsteps of the returning child are watched and kept by the gracious Father : "I hear him, and I turn My eye upon him." The

good eye and the good hand of the Lord upon the returning prodigal for good.

And then we come to a very beautiful, although a very singular metaphor: "I am like a green *cypress* tree." The singularity of this metaphor has led many people to suppose that it cannot be intended to apply to the Divine nature. But I think there can be no question but that it does, and that it yields a worthy and a very beautiful signification. The *cypress* tree, for one thing, is an evergreen. It stands there with its foliage unchanging amidst the fervid heats of summer, and amidst the snows of winter; in the brightest sunshine, dark with shade and coolness; in the wildest storm, serene and immovable. In the winter, when all the other trees of the wood have their leaves strewed beneath the bare branches, its green needles remain fresh as ever.

And so "I am like a green *cypress* tree"; unchanged amidst the changing seasons, unaffected by all the change. An everlasting metaphor, "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." The *cypress* in our climate is associated with graves and churchyards. Like the *yew* and some other evergreen plants, it has been set in our graveyards as an emblem of immortality. And so it has gathered to itself melancholy associations, which were altogether foreign to the mind and imagination of the prophet in our text. To him this tree, with its wealth of continual shadow, was an emblem of an unchanging blessing and protection. You need to live in a hot country where the sunshine is cruel, and the blue sky, with its blazing light, is dazzling and unhomelike, in order to know the blessedness of the shade, and to understand the meaning of such words as these.

Any of you that have ever travelled over the sunburnt plains of the south of France, or Italy, will know with what refreshment there comes in, both to the wearied eye, tired of the perpetual glare of the hot sun, and to the heated skin, fatigued with the continued sunshine,—there comes in the shadow of



those great black trees, black in their very greenness, that stand unwithered in the midst of the brilliancy.

And so says my text : " I am like a green cypress," strong, immutable ; a shadow, a protection to all those that come beneath my branches, shielding them from the hot sunshine ; keeping them dry in all the tempests and rain of the winter time ; spreading a green bough above them in the summer ; putting my broad sheaf of leaves between them and the blistering heat, and so preserving them from outward and from inward dangers. " The Lord is thy shade at thy right hand."

And there is another possible association in these words—fanciful, but it strikes me as very beautiful—for which I am indebted to an old Jewish Rabbi and commentator. He says a cypress tree bends down, and anybody that has seen one knows that its shelves of leafage do droop and come down near the ground ; that a man may lift up his hand and grasp the branches. There is an old legend that the boughs of the tree of life used to droop of themselves to the level of Adam's hand when he was pure and good. And when he had sinned and fallen, they lifted themselves above his reach. This metaphor of my text may be taken to express not only the immutability of the Divine Protector, but it may also hint to us—though I admit that it is a play of fancy rather than a fair interpretation—it may also be a hint to us of the condescension of the great loving Father, who stoops down from heaven in order that He may bring Himself within our reach, and has so stooped in a manner that Hosea knew nothing about, when He has done it in the fashion of the Man Christ Jesus, Who humbled Himself, and was found in fashion as a man.

So I think that if you will take these three points—unchangeableness, protection, condescension—you exhaust the force of this lovely emblem. And then there follows a last truth : " From Me is thy fruit found." The hard cones of the cypress are not worth calling fruit ; there is no fruit on it that

anybody can eat ; but it has so embodied in itself the virtues of all, and having the shadow of the cypress has the fruit, like that of the grape and the pomegranate.

"From Me is thy fruit found." The former verses, if you will look at them when you get home, have all been dwelling upon images drawn from the outer world to represent the future prosperity of the spiritual and temporal blessing of the restored Israelites. Their "branches shall spread, and their beauty be as the olive tree, and their smell as Lebanon." "They shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine."

But all that is not enough. The fruit that we bear in ourselves is not fruit that any man can take pleasure in. The fruit that shall sustain and help us must be the fruit that we gather from the rich branches of that "tree that bare all manner of fruits, and bare them every month," and whose very leaves were "for the healing of the nations." Not enough that we should have the productive energy within ourselves ; we must feed upon the rich harvest that is provided for us in God.

And so it all comes to this, dear brethren : the humblest voice of conscious unworthiness and lowly resolve to forsake evil, though it be whispered only in the very depths of our heart, finds its way into the ears of the merciful Father, and brings down the immediate answer, the benediction of His shadowing love and perpetual presence, and the fulness of fruit, which He alone can bestow.

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### *III. The Address of the Bishop Designate of London to the Workers in the West End Mission.\**

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I HAVE come here to-day to say something to those who are to take part in the work of the Mission at the West End of London. This Mission was arranged by the late Bishop of London, who would have had charge of it had it not pleased God to call him away to his rest ; and, now that he has left behind him the work that is to be done, ready to go on according to his direction, it seemed fitting that some one should say a few words to those who were to be employed in it, since he could no longer speak to them himself. I have been asked to undertake this task, and I have accepted the invitation in the humble hope that God in His gracious goodness would bless me with some of that marvellous tenderness and humility, with some of that quiet wisdom, and with some of that unfailing integrity which distinguished him. This Mission cannot recollection of that true Christian saint who has been called fail if it be carried on by those who take part in it with a due away to his rest in the very midst of the work—blessed in that the summons came while he was still engaged in his task, and blessed also in that he has been followed by the loving regrets of every Christian who knew him. I desire now to say to you a few words such as he might have said, and I hope for your indulgence if I speak with less knowledge of the arrangements of the diocese than he would have done. But at such a time it is good to be reminded of some of the

\* St Paul's, February 8th.

great principles and some of the most important rules which ought to govern the action of those who take up such a work.

And first a few words about the spirit in which a Mission should be undertaken. What, then, is the purpose of a Mission? Why is it that in a Church in which there is already provided every means for preaching the Gospel, for repeating the message again and again to those who have heard it before, and for calling within hearing of the message those who have not heard it at all—why is it that we are to step out of our ordinary course and organize a Mission like this? It is because we know that our ordinary teaching very often fails to reach those whom we should most desire it to reach; because we know that amongst those whom it does reach there are many who are not touched by it, inasmuch as the familiar voice and the ordinary round produce the kind of deadness of interest which familiarity with anything very often causes. We need something to rouse, to startle, to waken people out of their slumbers. We need now and then something of the power which comes of novelty. We need something to make us feel that what has been said so often is not on that account less true; that the commonplaces of ordinary religious teaching which come in the New Testament and are embodied in the services of the Church, have not lost their intrinsic force because our ears have become used to the phrases in which great truths are expressed.

We need something to make us feel the full force of that which we have so often heard—to feel that what we have heard so often that we are continually fancying that it cannot be worth listening to, is just as true and as important as ever it was. We wish to awaken the ignorant to a knowledge that there is something to be learnt. We wish to make those who are half-instructed know that what they have partly learned is of far more importance than they dream of. We wish those who are half-believers to understand the real mean-

ing of what they profess. We wish those who believe, and who already live in some degree by their belief, to see how much more there is even in the ordinary message of the Gospel than they have yet exhibited in their lives. What, then, is the first condition of doing such a work at all? The very first condition in teaching of any sort is that he who teaches shall be himself a learner. He who ceases to learn becomes incapable of teaching; for if he is not himself learning he loses all sympathy with the learner, and is no longer able to reach the intellect, the conscience, or the heart. If this is the rule with regard to every kind of teaching, it is above all things the rule in spiritual matters. He who would reach his hearer's soul, must preach to himself. Before he can preach to others there must be an echo within his own soul. His words must produce an effect upon his own life, or he will find it quite impossible to reach the souls of others, or to affect their lives. Every man, therefore, who takes part in such a Mission as this must be understood as pledging himself before God that he is desirous of awaking from his own slumbers; that he is longing for a higher life, and for a life lived closer to God; that he would rise above himself; that he regards the Mission as being as much a Mission to his own soul, as to any one to whom he may speak. Only those whose hearts are touched by God's grace, and whose souls are lifted up by God's Holy Spirit, can have any real power in arousing the consciences and touching the hearts of those who may listen to them. Begin your Mission, then, with the thought that you cannot be a mere machine—that you cannot speak to others on subjects which reach to all eternity, unless you begin yourself by feeling that those subjects have for you a power which they had not before; and unless you desire, not merely for their sakes but for your own, that they should climb after you towards the Throne of Grace. You know very well that one great danger of all work of this sort is that it may lead to nothing but a transient excitement. You may move men's souls; you may

rouse them ; you may stir them ; you may, perhaps, even fill them with enthusiasm ; but before very long the feeling may all pass away, and by-and-by, when they fall back into the ordinary ways of the Church, and when there is nothing but the ordinary round of worship, they may think it cold and dead, and may long for a repetition of the excitement, but their lives will not be better than they were before. If you desire something more than this, you must aim at making the work you do deeper than the expression of mere emotion. You must aim at reaching not only men's feelings but their consciences. You must aim at inducing them to form a resolute purpose, and forthwith to begin to carry that purpose into effect. But this must depend primarily upon yourselves, and you must begin by a deeper and more entire surrender of yourselves to God, and an earnest desire to be more devoted, more entirely unselfish, more true, and more thorough in the service which you are rendering to the Lord Jesus in your ordinary life. All true missionaries have owed their success to this cause rather than to the mere mechanical emotion which a Mission may create, but which may do far more harm than good. There is nothing so infectious as emotion of that kind. If you are moved and stirred yourself you will move and stir others ; but if it is no more than a transient emotion in yourself, it will produce no more than a transient emotion in those who hear you. Whatever work you may undertake, be sure that it will reflect the spirit in which it is done. If you are taking part in this Mission because you think that other people need it, though you do not, and because you fancy you may perhaps do some little good by pressing on others that which you do not feel you want yourself, you may be perfectly certain that there will be a feeling amongst your fellow-men that what you say is not thoroughly true, and does not come from your very heart and soul. They will feel—though they know not why—that they are not called by the true messenger of God, and that they are not summoned to do that which the



messenger believes to be the Lord's will. I go on to speak of the means by which the work itself may be done. You will find great diversity in the conditions under which that work will have to be carried on. There is a very large class of young men who live in lodgings, and who are often cut off from ordinary family life. Many of that class pay very little regard to religious observances, and they sometimes profess to be unbelievers, because they have never had the faith presented to them in such a way as to touch their consciences. Such cases will make very special attention necessary. I am not myself sufficiently acquainted with the circumstances of London to pronounce any authoritative opinion as to the means that should be employed ; but you will meet with great differences in the religious feelings, affections, and difficulties of those with whom you will have to do. You will find, for instance, some who do not believe all, because they know nothing about the Gospel, and others who do know something about it, but only just enough to make them aware of difficulties that have been started with regard to the revelation. Those who are unbelievers from ignorance—if such can be called unbelievers, in the strict sense of the term—can be reached more effectually by a simple narrative of what God has done for us than by anything else. Tell them that the Lord Jesus Christ sacrificed Himself for their sakes ; tell them who He was, and what He was ; how He lived, and what the teaching was that He gave those who heard Him. Some, again, are troubled with doubts and are unbelievers, not because they are unwilling to believe, but because there are stumbling-blocks in their way. These can be more easily won by endeavouring to set Christ before them than by any other arguments. Those who feel difficulties because they think that the Gospels were of later date than they are said to be, may be reminded that no one has disputed the date of St. Paul's Epistles, and yet that they present precisely the same kind of difficulties that have been alleged against the Gospels. But it is not wise, as a general rule, to enter much

into controversy. Where a man really requires argument his case will demand more time than you can give. It cannot be expected—indeed, it would not be right—that he should change his mind after half-an-hour's discussion, and such persons must therefore be left to the regular clergy of the Church. There is one more class—people who deny that they are unbelievers, but who are, nevertheless, practically denying the faith by the lives they lead. It is very often possible to find, even in them, something to which you can appeal. Some spark of generosity, some affection, may still live within their souls. You may often find in them some capacity for admiring what is noble, generous, and right; and that may sometimes be turned to excellent account. By far the larger majority of such persons are open to the sympathy which you may express for them. You may make them feel that you understand them, and in that way you may often unlock their hearts when mere reasoning with them would have had no effect. It is by these means, more than by any other, that you are likely to succeed in your great work, and perhaps help many to make a better, more spiritual, and more profitable use of that which must, after all, be the true means of maintaining Christianity in the world and in the souls of men;—I mean the ordinary unceasing work of the Church, carried on by what may seem to be mere machinery, and what, no doubt, would be mere machinery if the Lord Himself did not fill it with the power of His own grace—the organized ministry and the sacraments which He hath appointed, and which carry with them a divine power, because they exist by the Divine appointment.

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## IV. Canon Liddon on Cats.\*

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CATS are like oysters, in that no one is neutral about them ; every one is, explicitly or implicitly, friendly or hostile to them. And they are like children in their power of discovering, by a rapid and sure instinct, who likes them and who does not. It is difficult to win their affection ; and it is easy to forfeit what it is hard to win. But when given, their love, although less demonstrative, is more delicate and beautiful than that of a dog. Who that is on really intimate terms with a cat has not watched its dismay at the signs of packing-up and leaving home ? We ourselves have known a cat who would recognise his master's footstep after a three months' absence, and come out to meet him in the hall, with tail erect, and purring all over as if to the very verge of bursting. And another cat we know, who comes up every morning between six and seven o'clock to wake his master, sits on the bed, and very gently feels first one eyelid and then the other with his paw. When an eye opens, but not till then, the cat sets up a loud purr, like the prayer of a fire-worshipper to the rising sun. Those who say lightly that cats care only for places, and not for persons, should go to the Cat Show at the Crystal Palace, where they may see recognitions between cat and owner that will cure them of so shallow an opinion. When we were last there, one striking instance fell in our way. Cats greatly dislike these exhibitions ; a cat, as a rule, is like Queen Vashti, unwilling to be shown, even to the nobles, at the pleasure of an Ahasuerus. Shy, sensitive, wayward, and independent, a cat resents being placed upon a cushion in a wire cage, and exposed to the unintelligent criticism, to say nothing of the fingers, of a mob of

\* Instead of our usual sermon by Canon Liddon, we give this extract from the *Spectator* of January 17th, attributed to him on the best authority, and a very good specimen of his lighter vein.

sightseers. One very eminent cat, belonging to the Master's Common Room at Christ Church, Oxford, whose size and beauty have on several occasions entailed on him the hard necessity of attending a cat show, takes, it is said, three days to recover from the sense of humiliation and disgust which he feels, whether he gets a prize or not. On the occasion to which we refer, a row of distinguished cats were sitting, each on his cushion, with their backs turned to the sightseers, while their faces, when from time to time visible, were expressive of the deepest gloom and disgust. Presently two little girls pushed through the crowd to the cage of one of the largest of these cats, crying, "There's 'Dick!'" Instantly the great cat turned round, his face transfigured with joy, purred loudly, and endeavoured to scratch open the front of the cage, that he might rejoin his little friends, who were with difficulty persuaded to leave him at the show.

No doubt, local attachment is a prominent feature of a cat's mind; and a very good quality it is too. It, however, often gets cats into odd company, as it did those cats whom Baruch mentions as sitting upon the idols of Babylon (vi. 22), if not into serious misfortune. Under this head, our readers should study the story, given by M. Champfleury (pp. 142-143), of the French *cure's* cat, who was only induced to leave an old presbytery by being put into a bag and dipped in a pond. This attachment to place is closely connected with a cat's fine power of accurate observation. When a piece of furniture has been moved from its accustomed place, all the cats in the house set themselves to examine the phenomenon, with a view to discovering, if possible, its reason. Cats are, we apprehend, inveterate Conservatives. This principle, rather than ill-nature or jealousy, explains their conduct on the arrival of a new companion. They first of all tentatively examine it; then, especially if it be a kitten, they all spit at and scratch it. Only after slow approaches and the lapse of three or four days is the new-comer received even provisionally into the circle of established cats;

but at the end of a month it is just as secure in its position as is the first Reform Bill in the British Constitution, or any aged peer in the House of Lords. This ready acceptance of accomplished facts illustrates that quality of sagacity in cats upon which M. Champfleury lays stress (cf. pp. 108-127). Cats are, however, sometimes strangely at fault. So was Madame Théophile, a red cat with a white breast, pink nose, and blue eyes, who was "on terms of the closest intimacy" (p. 198) with M. Théophile Gautier. When Madame first saw a parrot, she evidently took it for a green chicken, and was preparing to deal with it accordingly. She gradually made her approaches; and at last, with one bound, sprang upon the perch where the parrot was sitting. But the bird, without moving, addressed Madame in a deep bass voice, "As-tu déjeuné, Jacquot?" For this accomplishment the cat was wholly unprepared; after all, it might be a man in disguise. The bird followed up its advantage by further questions, "Et de quoi?" "Du rôti du roi?" and as the cat retired in sheer terror, proceeded to quote French verses, which naturally and utterly completed Madame's discomfiture.

However, that we may not leave this subject at an awkward moment, we will advise our readers to study well the account which M. Gautier gives of a cat belonging, if we are right, to his second "dynasty," and bearing the imposing name of "Don Pierrot-de-Navarre"; nor should they omit the story of the epoch-marking cats (they were born soon after the appearance of *Les Misérables*), "Gavroche" and "Eponine." M. Gautier felt, as, indeed, well-bred cats themselves feel, the importance of names of distinction, such as are suggested by the events or literature of the day. We ourselves know cats who do not care to answer to "Puss," "Tom," "Minnie" (we remember one ferocious cat, larger than a puma, at Rouen, who was thus named), "Baby," and the foolish substitutes for real names which are so thoughtlessly thrown at them. At the same time, we should ourselves shrink from addressing a cat as

"Pisistratus Palæologus Porphyrogenitus Malachi Nero" (p. 212), although one magnificent being, who was once described at length in our own columns, seems to have owned this overwhelming name. *Est modus in rebus.*

It is to be wished that M. Champfleury could tell us more about the language of cats. He says, however, that sixty-three different *myows* have been counted, but that the notation of them is difficult. One, however, would appear certainly to mean, "Are you coming?" (p. 157). Probably cat-language contains more nouns than verbs, and more adjectives than nouns. Cats have, however, a habit, especially at night, of all talking at the same time,—a practice in which, as in other and higher respects, they resemble ladies; and this makes it difficult for any but intrepid students to arrive at large or definite conclusions on the question of their exact meaning.

Our author, we observe, shrinks from dealing with a delicate subject, much discussed in France; we mean, how far cats are good to eat. In China, it appears, "enormous cats are regularly fattened and eaten"; but French opinion seems still to require that cat should be disguised as rabbit (p. 186). Some of our readers may have known an eminent Oxford tutor whose memories of the Visigothic walls of Carcassonne were overshadowed by his having discovered that some professed hare at a *table d'hôte* in an hotel of that city was really cat. Certain it is, that during the siege of Paris many of the most beautiful and interesting cats in the place were eaten; and this would seem to show that French feeling on the subject must have changed considerably since the days of Montaigne. He illustrates the force of imagination by the case of a lady who died merely because she supposed, although quite without reason, that she had three or four days before eaten cat-pie:—

"Je sçay qu'un gentilhomme, ayant traicté chez luy une bonne compaignie, se vanta trois ou quatre iours aprez, par maniere de ieu (car il n'en estoit rien), de leur avoir fait manger un chat en paste : de quoy une damoiselle de la troupe print telle horreur, qu'en estant tumbee en un



grand desvoyement d'estomac et fièvre, il feutim possible de la sauver."—*Essais*, vol. i., p. 197, ed. 1828.

But happily this question is not yet within the region of practical ethics in England, nor is it likely to be so, unless, indeed, some of our more fervid vivisectionists should proceed to eat whatever they vivisect, as well as to vivisect whatever they eat. Here, however, we are in the neighbourhood of burning controversies, too serious and urgent to suit the genius of the amusing book before us. So we make our bow, once more advising our readers to make M. Champfleury's acquaintance for themselves.

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## *V. The New Bishops.*

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THERE has not been much variety in the newspaper notices which have appeared on the promotion of Bishop Temple, Dr. King, and Dr. Bickersteth. Of the three, most has been said in favour of the second ; but we are by no means sure that he has had full justice done him.

Bishop Temple has been formally forgiven by the *Record* for the part he took in contributing to *Essays and Reviews*. The offence (if such it be) has been minimised, and it has been said, with perfect truth, that there is nothing very new or dangerous in Dr. Temple's article. But as we understood it at the time, Dr. Temple was the editor of the publication, which was undoubtedly meant as a manifesto of the Broad School in the Church of England. Far abler and more advanced men than Dr. Temple contributed to that volume ; in particular, the Rev. H. B. Wilson, whose Bampton Lecture was the only attempt we know at construction on a Broad Church basis. Mr. Wilson was long the theological critic in the

*Westminster*; probably it is to him George Eliot refers when she speaks of a Mr. Wilson going to start an undenominational church in London. We believe he has long been laid aside from work. Dr. Temple's sermons are by far his best writings; they are among the most strong and thoughtful sermons of the day. His Bampton Lecture, on the other hand, is a poor and disappointing production.

Justice has been done to Canon King's painful spiritual influence. In a paper on the "Recent Charges in Oxford," contributed lately to the *Church Quarterly Review*, by Canon Liddon, this has been most happily commented on. But the great intellectual strength which appears in Canon King's more elaborate sermons has not been adequately recognised. A volume of his University Sermons would take a permanent place in homiletic literature, and we earnestly suggest to Canon King's friends, of whom there are many among our readers, that they should take the matter up. We have previously referred to Canon King's little volume on the "Seven Words," which we once more recommend as incomparably the finest treatment of the subject.

On Dr. Bickersteth we prefer to say little. Occupying an impartial position, as we do, we are, however, compelled to say that it is another proof of the growing intellectual weakness of the evangelical party. There are scholars among them; and why such men as Howson, Moule, Forrest, and others should have been passed over, we do not know. We should not consider it respectful to speak of the "decent debility of a mediocre poetaster" in connection with Dr. Bickersteth, but whoever refrains has conquered a temptation.

Meanwhile, are Archdeacon Farrar, Canon Liddon, Canon Hole, and Baring Gould fixed for life?

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## VI. *Brief Outlines and Sermon Notes.*

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### I. CHRIST AND THE MASSES.

BY THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

ON Sunday afternoon, February 8th, Westminster Abbey was crowded, and some hundreds of intending worshippers were not able to obtain admittance. The service was intoned by the precentor (the Rev. Flood Jones), and the lessons were read by Dr. Troutbeck. The Archbishop of Canterbury preached the sermon, selecting for his text Matthew ix., part of the 36th and 37th verses: "They fainted, and were as sheep having no shepherd. Then said He unto His disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous." So looked Christ at "the masses," so He spoke of them. How had the world looked on them, and spoken of them? The world had always found the increase of its own masses its most invincible difficulty. Ancient kings invented monstrous tasks for them to perform, or monstrous wars to wage. Some ancient states held periodical massacres of them; and philosophers had taught that their freedom was their destruction, and that any government by them was but a mere transition to despotism. The Roman Empire, whose brute force was for centuries sufficient for anything, kept the masses in order at last by the daily distribution of food and tickets for the circus, and after all perished by the masses, with which it could not deal. First contempt and then fear were the emotions with which the multitudes were regarded universally in heathen times. Was there one other person in all the world in the year of our Lord 31, except the Lord Himself, Who, looking on the multitudes, would have said—"This is God's harvest—the harvest truly is plenteous." This despised, rambling, shifting populace, uncared for and mocked, is God's golden corn, the wealth of God's garner, the seed which He sowed in His wide fields, now grown up and ripe

unto the harvest, and which could not be allowed to rot upon the ground, and the Church had to find the labourers and the muscles to gather it in. The Master sent out all the labourers that there were, every one of them, and gave them power—power to expel the unclean spirits from the crowd, and to tend all their sufferings and bring them back to health. He gave them the present gift of doing rapidly by way of illustration, as it were, of what He was laying on us of to-day to do by patience and devotion, but always through the same power. He told them how they should go on with the work after His departure, and the principles on which the work should be continued, and the central principle, He said, was to be courage. They were never to be afraid, because the power which He then gave He would go on giving, and nothing would ever check that power except cowardice. When He founded His Church he founded a mission, an unending mission with power which doubt and fear alone could quench, a power of which no formality was the secret, and which was ever ready to burst forth and spring up at the true touch of faith. This was the power which the Church of London was casting on herself this week. The form might be infinitely varied, but His mission was ever the same. Changes had fallen both upon this diocese and upon our country since this mission was planned. The pastor under whose guiding hand this mission was planned, preached not here, but from the endless world into which he was carried so quickly; but he still preached by his calm labour, stainless honour, and self-subduing love of souls. Their new pastor was not theirs yet, but the hope of him was of itself a mission. While recalling the changes which were ever taking place in the surrounding circumstances of the Church, we could not forget the change which had come over the aspirations of our brave countrymen in Egypt. The confident expectations of a few days ago had, alas! altered into “Too late!”—into defeat and capture of Englishmen. Their soldiers were at the mercy of the desert. God be merciful. Indeed! God had already been merciful; and it was something to tell them that, after a week’s earnest prayer, an authoritative message had just been received (by the Dean of Westminster), that General Gordon was alive. [It afterwards turned out that this statement was made in error.] After the first flush caused by that hero’s generosity had died

away, how quietly the weeks and months passed on with us. Then the unexpected came, only for us to find that security was not assurance. Oh, in all the week's Mission work let our prayers be strong and earnest for our men who suffer abroad, and for those that sorrow at home, and let their efforts stimulate the efforts of the Church for saving souls. Let it be not "too late" for the Church and the multitude. Had He spoken as if the multitude were the multitude of the poor only? It was not so. Many rich were in truth poorer than they. Christ yearned not for the poor only, for all were dear to Him. The poor themselves were not the same unchanged people that they had continued to be until the last half century. Education had made an incalculable change in their condition, and some had feared that change. But why should education affect them more injuriously than it had affected us? Whether educated or uneducated, the poor were not the only multitude for whom Christ yearned, because they want feeding and leading. We know how He characterized the difficulties of the rich in the way of salvation by language which might seem overstrained. It was not the fatal luxuriousness of the rich only, but it was their ceaseless round of engagements, which, much more than wealth itself, made it so difficult for virtues like faith, hope, and charity, to effect a lodgment in their souls. Would they not agree with him that athwart all the progressive movement and advancing civilization of this country of late years, there lay the shadow of a great uneasiness that we were losing something amid all our gains, and that what we were achieving was not what we truly wished for? He believed that everywhere there was a yearning for something more true and spiritual than the masses of men yet possessed. They knew that they were not Christians in earnest, and they wanted to be so if they could only find the way. He believed that there were few hearts who would not bear him out in that; few who were not satisfied with what they had unless they had found the one thing needful. Some, then, might be expecting to hear him say that if these people would have but the courage to take one short step, all would be well with them. He could not say that. In his experience he had seldom seen the effort of one small, single step put an end to the great struggle. He had known many who had thought that they were delivered at once from sin by the effort,

but they were not. They endured but for a little while, and in the time of temptation fell away. But what he had seen over and over again—and it was a blessed sight—was the way of self-discipline, humbly undertaken, under the healing shadow of the cross, with the kindly comfort of the Holy Spirit, so steadfastly persevered in, with a resolution not to look back, with a hope that would not let itself be quenched, and he had been amazed to see the living efficacy of faith, working through discipline and love, and bringing peace at the last. In a mission one of the noblest results was to help souls to make a new beginning, and to help those who would lead a new life. There were three points of importance to be noted. There was the visible gain of a mission, the visible test of a mission, and the visible application of a mission. The visible gain was that it gave every Christian an opportunity of declaring himself to be a Christian, and of speaking out more boldly. The visible test was to be found in the fact that a mission was a failure in any parish where the clergy were not left with much more work to do after it was over, and also with many more workers to take part in the work. The visible application was to be seen when people took up some simple work for Christ as for Christ—something that they would not have taken up but for the mission—not to hedge with, but really to do something for Christ. And then as to the power to which the mission trusted. There was a power which throbbed through and through the heart of any true mission, by which the sinner would be changed, and the careless made more sincere. Nothing could explain this but the plain teaching of Christ. It was power not residing in human nature, but came directly from God, with laws as real and as universal as nature's laws; and unless it were acknowledged, prayed for, and used as God's gift, there was no spiritual gift obtained or obtainable. When our Lord sent out His disciples on their first mission, He gave them power to cast out the evil spirits and to heal, and after that He gave to His Church the power to forgive sins. He was not speaking of ministerial absolution, or anything of the sort, but simply that as a fact He told His gathered disciples that in His Church there should dwell this power of His own. Then again just before His ascension He declared that all power was given Him in heaven and earth, and that therefore they were to make disciples of all



nations. Why that "therefore"? What is the connecting link between His power and their teaching? He supplied it Himself when He said, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world"; meaning, "I have the power, and I am with you; therefore call, invite, teach, baptize, bless, lift human nature itself, for I, with all My power, am among you." That was the secret of the Christian Church, and the secret of every real mission. If he was not to believe and expect that Divine power was with the Church, then he must either disbelieve the record of Christ's language, or else believe that there was a great gulf fixed between His life and our work; but he could never believe that, for he could see all through Church history that power at work, though not half enough taken account of by Christian writers, but plainly there. In the faith of that promise, let the workers enter upon this mission. First, let them repent themselves, and then intercede for others; and, lastly, let them fling themselves heart and soul upon the promise of power, believing that He would send it upon all the workers of the several parishes, if they would but ask for it. Only let these blessings be freely asked for and confidently expected, and they would be largely obtained, and then would be seen the saving of the harvest of God.

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## II. CHRIST THE CENTRE.

JOHN xix. 18.

THE preacher wanted, he said, to show Jesus as the centre figure of all the pictures of the Bible. He, indeed, was the pivot of life. To begin at the beginning, we have Him as the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. In this character He stands between the eternal Father's decree for man's salvation, and the Holy Spirit's work in the same great cause. He is the converging and vitalising point of the whole. Follow it on. In the promise made in Eden (Gen. iii. 15) we have a glimpse at Jesus—such as we get of a star gleaming faintly in the murky heavens—one which has been expanding all down the ages until it has become "the light" of the world. The same thing is seen

in the Passover ; the Lamb was "in the midst"—a Saviour. The same again throughout the journeyings of the Israelites. Whenever they encamped it was in circles, in the centre was the Tabernacle, in the centre of the Tabernacle was the Ark, in the midst of the Ark the blood-sprinkled mercy-seat—a type of Jesus. Equally striking is the instance of the serpent-plague and cure. There the brazen pole was raised "in the midst." So on and on we might pass through the galleries of the Old Testament, seeing in one and all, by type or prophecy, "Jesus in the midst." And in the New Testament this is more strikingly so. For we have a personal Saviour. See Jesus in the midst of sages and shepherds at the very commencement of His life ; and again as a Teacher in the midst of the multitude ; and as the Bread-winner, and Bread-blessor, when surrounded by the hungry throngs ; and again, as the Healer, with sick and suffering brought from every quarter to this gracious centre ; and once more as the centre of a baby congregation. Time would not allow us to pass along these enchanting ways, but in closing, one may remind oneself of Jesus as He shall be "in the midst" of the throne and glories of Heaven.

*J. Jackson Wray.*

(Metropolitan Tabernacle, February 8th.)

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### III. THE GENEALOGY OF CHRIST.

THESE chronicles have a mission. As no star was useless in the heavens, and as every atom has been created for a purpose, so God would not devote seventeen verses of His Book to a pedigree without a purpose. Even the desert has a mission, and although the text might appear like a desert, at the end of it there was the Holy Child, Jesus. We learn from this genealogy :

I. God's fidelity to His promise. God had promised Abraham that in him should all the families of the earth be blessed, and here we read of its fulfilment.

II. The Eternal God never works hurriedly. Scientists say that the earth existed ten millions of years before any life came

into existence upon it. And God took two thousand years before He gave His Son to the world.

III. The human race is very closely inter-related. Between every verse we read, "God hath made of one blood all the nations of the earth. Mankind is one family, and every war that occurred was a family strife.

IV. The universality of death. Forty-two generations pass before us, and sink into the grave.

V. The all inclusiveness of Christ's mission. Christ touched all sorts of people in this pedigree in order that He might save all sorts of people. All the race may participate in the riches of His grace.

VI. The marvellous way in which God overrules evil in order to give due prominence to Christ. Who but God could have produced a perfect man out of such a pedigree? "All's well that ends well." The pedigree ends well because it ends with Christ. Christ is the apex of this pyramid, and the crown and glory of the race.

*J. Ossian Davies.*

(New Court Chapel, February 8th.)

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#### IV. "TO HIM THAT OVERCOMETH."

BY REV. DR. STANFORD.

ON February 5th, Dr. Stanford, who has been unwell for so long, occupied his pulpit at Denmark Place Chapel for a second time since his convalescence, and preached with much fervour from Revelation ii. 7, "To him that overcometh." This, said the preacher, was the title of the conquering Christian; this title is repeated seven times in the messages to the Churches. In each instance this title was connected with a word of promise, a word couched in different language to meet the different circumstances and atmospheres in which the conquering Christian might be called to live. He would ask the attention of his hearers to certain signs by which he might be distinguished; and first,

"*To him that overcometh*" was the distinction of him who was in Christ. This was essential. Out of Christ there could be no spiritual victory. They must be in Christ to begin with. This

thought was a favourite with Paul, who in a remarkable passage, which gave the biography of his soul, spoke of himself as a man *in* Christ. "In Christ"; as if that were the word describing the initial, central, and radical distinction of every Christian man; a distinction above all distinctions which men most regarded and honoured. Let no one say this expression was out of date; let no one try to explode it into metaphor, or try to confine it to philosophical subtlety; let no one use it because it was thought to be one of the common-places in people who confess Christ. Everything divine in human character must begin by a realization of this being "in Christ." In Christ, the Champion, Who, long before our existence, and far outside our personality, overcame for us and fought the mighty mystic battle of Calvary; and we were in Him now, if we had a title to the distinction of overcoming.

But let no one misunderstand. To him that overcometh is the distinction of him who, though he is in Christ, and while he is in Christ, is also engaged in Christian warfare. Many a time this idea of being in Christ had been taken apart from its connections, and had given some ground on the part of outsiders for their saying this was Calvinism, and not Christianity. Let no one say, "I am in Christ, and therefore I need not fight; I am in Christ, my soul may rock itself to sleep; I am in Christ, and therefore my religion is summed up in the simple conception of rest and joy. Let no one trouble me while I make my religion a delight and nothing else. A delight in meetings which rouse the nervous life. I am in Christ, and therefore need take no trouble, as Christ has taken all the trouble for me, and has absolutely redeemed and saved me. Therefore I step into this boat, and let it drift while I drop to sleep, with the sure and certain conviction that it will one day touch the shores of that immortality for which I am bound." Let every one who is in Christ remember that He has overcome the primal curse to which he was once in helpless bondage, only to leave us free to fight the Christian warfare while life shall last. But while in the act of fighting the man in Christ will be in the act of conquering. If they were to be addressed by God in the words of the text they must be fighters for *victory*; for no man could overcome who was not at the same time in conflict. If they were conquering Christians *now*, it was

because Christ had given them those gifts promised in His word to him that *overcometh*.

The question before them was not quite simple; not quite easy to make plain. He (Dr. Stanford) knew that the popular interpretation of the promise in connection with this title was that it was a title that would be fulfilled in heaven—when the fighting was over; when life on earth had ended. He, however, thought the contrary. If Christ had said, "I will give the crown; I will give the inheritance incorruptible and that fadeth not away. I will give rest for the people of God, a place among the many mansions," then they would have understood those words to be indicative of heaven, and therefore only to be fulfilled in the *future* life. But though the construction was obscure, and its interpretation difficult, he must, and did, come to the conclusion that that word of promise, if it did indeed include reference to the future life, began with a reference to the life that was now.

"*To him that overcometh*" told them what the Christian was *now*, and not what he *would* be; and that the word of promise was intended to inspire the Christian while in the act of fighting; showing that in the act of fighting he was really in the act of overcoming; and showing him, too, that he was so, by receiving the gifts which were mentioned in the words of promise. Christ would give, not merely in another world, when they had fought the fight, but He would give here, now, on earth, the will to win it; He would give to each of them who was a fighter, by that fact to be an overcomer, and so account for the overcoming. For, let them look at the terms employed.

Take the words "*To him that overcometh* I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." What was the tree of life in the earthly paradise but the symbol of coming immortality? And so Christ would give, all through the earthly battle of the Christian, a foretaste—a beginning of immortality—heavenly fruits on earthly ground before they reached the heavenly field, or walked the golden streets. And thus, he thought, these words had an earthly as well as a heavenly reference. And so to him, of whom it was said he should not be hurt of the second death. He knew that whatever darts struck him here, they would not strike the *true* life.

"*To him that overcometh* will I give to eat of the hidden

manna." Manna was the Israelites' food; and the true manna was the type of the grace of Christ (John vi.). Christ gave Himself, and gave, therefore, His grace to feed our immortal life. And we needed this food if we were to have immortality. Manna was for the wilderness, to strengthen the true Israelites in their conflict and in their journey; and this could only be fulfilled while on earth, fighting our way to the land of promise. While our zeal, courage, and immortality were fed, we should be more than conquerors.

Then again, "*To him that overcometh* will I give the white stone." Amongst the Greeks, the giving of a white stone was the sign of acquittal or approval, as the black stone meant condemnation. Christ gave the stone of acquittal or approval; and the Christian therefore was calm, whatever foes might arise, for he knew that he had the white stone that had accepted and justified him; and while he had that conviction he was invincible.

In another place they would find something like this:—"He that overcometh shall be a pillar in My house, and shall no more go out, and on that pillar shall be engraved the name of God." The practice prevailed amongst the Greeks of some rich men sending a pillar for the temple, bearing their names, as monumental of their glory. So God would make all Christians pillars in His temple—the Church of God on earth and in heaven. A true pillar in God's temple was a man who helped to prop it up; who supported it by his preaching, by his prayers, and by his property, and the name written on him is the name of his God.

"*To him that overcometh* will I give that morning star," indicated that it was not morning, not heaven, yet. The morning star shined when all was darkness around it. Mark the royal word, "I will give." Christ was not always saying, "I will give," and was never giving. The Christian was spoken of here as though God saw the future in the present.

"*To him that overcometh*" was the distinction of those who were fighting against their own sins; being in Christ, having those gifts perpetually from the hand of Christ; fighting against his *own* sins, for every man was a double man, and had to fight with himself—with all that within was waiting to open the door secretly to the foe without. That was the greatest thing which



made for Christian victory, victory within. Every Christian was a warrior born, and must always have on the armour of God. He puts it on in conversion, never to put it off till he dies, so that he may be always ready to meet the inevitable foe. Thus he is a fighter, but, thanks to God, he is also an overcomer—a victor—though he may not always know this. Though he fall he shall rise again; and when he has passed through the brief sleep of death, he will indeed know the title of him that overcometh.

“*To him that overcometh*” is the distinction of those who in Christ, and by the gift of Christ, are fighting against the evils of the world—those who are fighting against the system of false religion and false philosophy. Christians by the means he had indicated fought against war. But they had not yet fought it out of the world, for be the scene ever so serene they must hear the Word of God saying, “This is not your peace”; and only by the power of the Gospel would wars be made to cease.

In the course of a passing allusion to the death of General Gordon, Dr. Stanford said that every Christian man who stood before his fellow-men, longed for power to say a word suited to the sad event which had cut the nation to the heart. He only wished to allude to Gordon as a man who had long been dear to them, and at the mention of whose name the tears stood still and burned in their eyes. He was one of the good soldiers of Christ. There were many mentioned in the Holy Book, certain good centurions. But Gordon had fallen!—fallen in a most disastrous way. Nelson fell while his nation shouted “Victory”; Gordon fell while the enemy shouted “Victory.” Strange end to a man who is a soldier of Christ! Yet verily he was one who had overcome.

In conclusion, Dr. Stanford said: I ask every one to be sure that he is in that spiritual warfare; to be sure that he is living near to that hand and heart by which the victory is won. Oh! be sure of it *to-day*; grasp the hand of Christ *to-day*, and then be sure that you will from that moment be one of the overcomers. It *must* be so, for Christ has overcome the greatest of all foes. The silent night, the soft bed, cannot be more welcome to a man after a long day’s journey, or a hard day’s fight, than death can be to the man who knows that death is conquered; who can say, “I have not to fight with death; that Christ has fought; I have

merely fought through all the other fight"; or with St. Paul, can say, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing."

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## VII. *Biblical Illustrations and Anecdotes.\**

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### I. THE WELLS.

"With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation."—ISA. xii. 3.

How much there has been said in the news from our army in Egypt about the wells! Every telegram has contained something about securing the wells, defending the wells; it was a matter in the terrible desert of vital importance. Vambéry, in "Travels in Central Africa," speaking of the terrors of thirst, says:—"It is a horrible sight to see the father hide his store of water from his son, and brother from brother; each drop is life, and when men feel the torture of thirst there is not, as in the other dangers of life, any spirit of self-sacrifice, or any feeling of generosity. . . . My pen is too feeble to furnish even a slight sketch of the martyrdom that thirst occasions; I think that no death can be more painful. Although I have found myself able to nerve myself to face all other perils, here I felt quite broken." What a blessed thing in this wilderness of life is the fountain of living waters, free to all.

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\* We propose to make this a feature of the CONTEMPORARY PULPIT. These are mainly from the *Christian Journal*, but in future they will be, as far as possible, original.

## II. THE SHINING LIGHT.

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”—MATT. v. 16.

*Cassell's Family Magazine* for February observes:—“That the sun-spots are intimately connected with some terrestrial phenomena there can be little doubt. Variations of the compass, magnetic storms, and auroral displays not only show a periodical variation corresponding with that of sun-spots, but great outbursts of spots are usually accompanied on the same day of their occurrence by great disturbances of the needle.” Once it was thought these spots meant little or nothing, but science concludes otherwise now—they mean all kinds of terrible terrestrial mischief. So do the spots on the Church of Christ, which is the sun of society. Spots on the Christian character have a great and disastrous influence.

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## III. THE POWER OF HOPE.

“And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as he is pure.”—I JOHN iii. 3.

“THIS life is, as George Herbert says, but a tuning of the instruments—a preparation for that which is to come. As the blossom is but the forerunner of the fruit and the flower, so the earthly body is but the prelude of the more perfect and more beautiful spiritual existence. This the Christian knows, and so he stands ever ready, wearing the breastplate of faith and love, and the helmet of saving hope, and listening for the shout of his coming Lord, which is to call him to his purchased possession.”  
—G. H. B. Macleod

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## IV. THE WOLF IN THE SHEEP.

“But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.”—GAL. v. 15.

Two friends met a short time ago. One inquired of the other how his church was prospering.

"Not at all, I am sorry to say," was the answer; "our numbers are diminishing weekly."

"Why, how is that? Has the wolf got into the fold?"

"Worse than that, I fear. If it was only the wolf that was worrying the flock, we might cherish the hope that we could get him driven away. The fact is, that the sheep have taken to worrying each other, and our condition, therefore, could not be worse."

## V. USING THE AXE.

"A man was famous according as he lifted up axes upon the thick trees."  
—PSALM lxxiv. 5.

*The Countries of the World* for February observes: "Long education is necessary for any one to become an adept in the use of the axe. It is really a fine-art sight to see a thorough axeman at work. How easily—almost without an effort, one would think—he swings the axe over his head, but every time brings it down within a hair's breadth of the right place! Not a blow is wasted. At every stroke a huge wedge-shaped chip flies; and with a sound that makes the silent forest echo, the great tree shriven creases, and then crashes to the ground, bringing along with it often a thicket of its smaller relatives, which have grown up under its shade." Oh, for men to fell the many upas trees of society! Oh, for men to clear the way of all that obstructs the coming of the Master! Oh, for men to prepare material for the building of God's living temple!

## VI. "SHINE!"

ISA. lx. i.

THIS, as addressed to the Church, means simply, receive God's light! Drink in at every pore the rays of the sun of righteousness.

Some of you may have been spectators of that most unearthly of all sights given to human eyes below—a sunrise over snow mountains; when far above the earth's surface, above long-spread ranges of mountain tops, above even the cloud which rested on

the summit of most of them, there appeared just one peak, clad not in golden but in rosy light—and for the moment you took it for a cloud itself, so strangely delicate, so transparently immaterial, was the form before you ; so severed from earth, so far uplifted in heaven. But in reality it was nothing more than the pointed horn of a solid mountain ; all else it owed, all that was distinctive, all that was glorious, to the perfection of its irradiation—to the absolute self-forgetfulness (so to speak) of its receptivity.

That is an example of the thing denoted by the change to “shine.” Receive God’s light.—*C. F. Vaughan.*

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#### VII. “I HAVE *NOT* LOST MY ALL.”

SOME years ago a Christian merchant failed in business, and, in a state of distraction, said to his family, “I’m a ruined man, I’ve lost my all !” “*All !*” said his wife ; “no, *I* am left.” “All, papa ?” said his eldest boy ; “*here am I.*” “And I, too,” said his little girl, running up and putting her arms around his neck. “I’m not lost, papa,” said Eddie. “And you have your *health* left,” repeated his wife, “and your hands to work with.” “And *I* can help you,” said his eldest son. “And you have your two feet, papa, to carry you about, and your two eyes to see with,” said little Eddie. “And you have God’s promises,” said the grandmother. “And a good God,” said the wife. “And a heaven to go to,” said the little girl. “And Jesus who came to fetch us there,” said the eldest boy. “God forgive me,” said the poor merchant, bursting into tears, “I have *not* lost my *all* ; what have I lost compared with what I have left ?” And so he took comfort, and started afresh in the strength of the Lord, casting all his care on Him who so lovingly cares for all His children.

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#### VIII. DEMOLISHING THE BIBLE.

THE Bible is a book which has been refuted, demolished, overthrown, and exploded, more times than any other book you ever heard of. Every little while somebody starts up and upsets this

book ; and it is like upsetting a solid cube of granite. It is just as big one way as the other ; and when they have upset it, it is right side up still. Every little while, somebody blows up the Bible ; but when it comes down it alights on its feet, and runs faster than ever through the world. They overthrew the Bible a century ago, in Voltaire's time—entirely demolished the whole thing. In less than a hundred years, said Voltaire, Christianity will have been swept from existence, and will have passed into history. Infidelity ran riot through France, red-handed and impious. A century has passed away. Voltaire has "passed into history," and not very respectable history either ; but his old printing-press, it is said, has been used to print the Word of God ; and the very house where he lived is packed with Bibles, a dépôt for the Geneva Bible Society. Thomas Paine demolished the Bible, and finished it off finally ; but after he had crawled despairingly into a drunkard's grave in 1809, the book took such a leap that since that time more than twenty times as many Bibles have been produced and scattered through the world as ever were produced before since the creation of man. Up to the year 1800, from four to six million copies of the Scriptures, in some thirty different languages, comprised all that had been produced since the world began. Eighty years later, in 1880, the statistics of eighty different Bible societies which are now in existence, with their unnumbered agents and auxiliaries, report more than one hundred and sixty-five million Bibles, Testaments, and portions of Scripture, with two hundred and six translations, distributed by Bible Societies alone since 1804 ; to say nothing of the unknown millions of Bibles and Testaments which have been issued and circulated by private publishers throughout the world. For a book that has been demolished so many times, it still shows signs of considerable life.

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# *I. Sermons.*



## THE DIVINE COMPANIONSHIP.

BY THE BISHOP DESIGNATE OF LINCOLN.\*

“ I will not leave thee until I have done all that I have spoken to thee of.”  
—GEN. xxviii. 15.

THESE words are part of that comforting assurance which God vouchsafed to the Patriarch Jacob, on that first night when he slept away from his father's house, going out to the unknown future of his life's work. The lives of the saints are recorded for our edification to lift us up above the average level with which the world is generally content. Their perfections are to be to us examples of the heights to which man with God can reach ; and yet it is often the imperfections and faults of the saints which seem to help us most, to give us comfort, to save us from despair, proving to us that God can pardon and love again. The concluding record of David's great sin is wonderfully rapid—“and she bare a son, and he called his name Solomon, *and the Lord loved him.*” So it was with the life of him to whom my text refers. His life had not always been what it was now to be. Jacob's life began in

\* Preached in Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford, March 1885.

moral confusion. True, there was no great moral flaw, such as in the life of David, but there had been a want of perfect openness, frankness, generosity in carrying out his highest aims. His life as recorded to us starts in confusion, as in a moral tangle. On that first night, when he had left his mother who had spoilt him, and his father whom he had deceived, and his brother whom he had robbed, however strong an inner sense of right there may have been, we can hardly imagine but that there must have been some sense of shame, and sorrow, and fear. And yet to such a soul God in His goodness came, and came quietly, and comforted him with the assurance of His presence, and of His love, nay, of His companionship, and of His abundant blessing.

"Behold! *I* am with thee, and will keep thee, in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land, for I will not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of."

Is not this history very like our own? When we look back over the pathway of our life, how much wandering, how much stumbling, how much halting, is there! Even if by God's goodness the true pathway has never been wholly lost for long, yet our best intentions have been often, like Jacob's, wrongly carried out, perhaps injuriously, more than we know, to those whom still in the paradox of our confusion we loved. In one way or another most of us have to admit a tangle and confusion in the past. And yet the other side of Jacob's history is true also; there is that mysterious "all that I have spoken to thee of," that constant secret call which has accompanied us along the pathway of our lives, often quite from childhood, telling us to be better, telling us not only that we ought to be better, but that we may be better; that we can do better

than we have done; a voice which all along has said, "Friend, go up higher." Not those voices of pride, and ambition, and self-conceit, which we know so well; not that debauchery of the imagination—castle building. No; something quite different from all that. "The go up higher" is a call to new and harder spiritual effort, to rise higher above the things of the world, implying more detachment, fresh self-sacrifice, living in a spiritual atmosphere, which, being higher, will be, as it were, harder to breathe. Of the reality of this mysterious voice, telling us of the higher path, we are most of us thoroughly conscious; and with this mysterious "all that I have spoken to thee of" there is yet the still greater comfort of the assurance of the companionship of God Himself; this is the real stay and joy of life.

This was the promise to the once entangled Patriarch Jacob, and it may be ours. "I will not leave thee until I have done all that I have spoken to thee of."

And here you will naturally wish to say: "Put aside now your manuscript, and tell us plainly how this can be. What do you mean by this consciousness of the companionship of God?"

Brethren, you have compelled me to speak to-day, and you have compelled me, in a measure, to speak of myself; I am to speak to many of you as for the last time, as leaving you, and the consciousness of this necessity fills me with myself, for in leaving Oxford I am leaving a home endeared to me by memories which no other home in this world can ever have; for in Oxford the tenderest memories of my childhood, for ten years, were ever present to me, as bright and loving as in the bright sunlight of my youth. No other place of residence can ever give me that.

And yet with all this, if I try to sum up the thoughts

with which I shall leave Oxford, I must express them in the words *gratitude* and *love*. Never can I be thankful enough for the forbearance and kindness which I have received from all during the past twelve years, whether members of this University or of the city. Coming amongst you as I did, socially unknown, academically nothing, it has strengthened my faith to find men of all ages, so infinitely my superiors in many gifts, willing to accept such services as I could offer them, and not merely to accept them, but to accept them with respect and gratitude, and even love. This is a great possession to have acquired in Oxford, and for it I desire to express to all whom it may concern my sincerest gratitude. And yet, if you will bear with me, this is not all I have to say. The text speaks of God's companionship—"I will not leave thee."

In what sense is this real and true? I must say (though I may fail in my endeavour to explain what I mean), it is true, thank God, and most real. And it is for this, above all else, that I am enabled to say that I leave Oxford with gratitude; gratitude to Almighty God for a firmer, fuller confidence in His presence.

But what, you will say, does this mean? What makes up this treasure of which you speak? If I try and tell you it can only be in fragments, but I will try to tell you what the treasure is which enables me to leave you enriched and in peace.

First, there is the consciousness of personality. In spite of all the supposed metaphysical impossibility of the subject being its own object—and the rest of it—there rests for me this fact, I am, and I know it. I am not altogether without the consciousness of the agony which it has cost some minds to get thus far, though to most it

may seem self-evident. For me it is a matter of profound gratitude that the fact remains.

2. Then, *with* this, *round about* this, *in* this, I leave it to you to arrange them as you please; I am conscious of possessing certain powers, call them what you choose.

There is *one*, it is more pure than *ἔρως*, it has more mind in it than *φίλησις*, it is more disinterested than *φιλία* in its ordinary meaning, it is independent of reciprocity, at least from man, no earth-born word has ever expressed it—it is *ἀγάπη*—we call it charity, or love. It is the power which, rightly directed, will prevail.

If you ask me, as many have done, How is this power to be cultivated and increased? I answer, *by never using it unworthily*, then it will, as by its own nature, flow on. It comes from a fountain that rises in hills higher than any which this world has known, and its tendency is to rise to its own level, and to carry you up beyond what you ask or think.

And there is another power, or call it what you please, different from love, which enables me to divide things, and comprehend things again as under one general idea. The exercise of this power produces a kind of ravishment as love does, but it is not love. You may call it reason, or what you please, it is that which made the great philosopher of old say, "If I perceive any one else able to comprehend the one and the many, as they are in nature, him I follow behind as in the footsteps of a God." It has, I have sometimes thought, a recognition in the revealed record of creation when, on the contemplation of the whole, an additional expression of satisfaction is given, "God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was *very* good." The contemplation of the one was pronounced good, but the one in relation to the many

"*very good.*" I know not whether this is so, but I know that there is the power and that it is the groundwork at least of infinite interest, satisfaction, joy, and hope.

But my gratitude compels to speak of something more. The sight may be the keenest bodily sense, but wisdom lies beyond its ken. Besides the true and false, the right and wrong, which we apply to the result of numbers, there is another right and wrong, a good and bad. And of this some power in me, or with me, lying round about my personality, so that I cannot separate it from me, speaks, and fills me with a peculiar awe. With this my greatest pains and pleasures are connected. Call it conscience, or what you please; it is a most precious and awful possession. And there is one more mysterious power with which I am conscious of leaving you, it lies somewhere very far back, deep down by, or in, my very being, it is most mysterious; sometimes so strong, sometimes so weak, able to confuse all, and put wrong for right and right for wrong, or able to command all, and hold all, even if it hold them in obedience to another—I mean the *will*, or call it what you please. It means for me that I am free. It means that I can feel all that I can feel, and see all that I can see, and think all that I can think, which even includes (with reverence let me say it) God Himself, and yet feel that I am free; free even to fight against the Almighty, or, God help me, to perfect my freedom in the bondage of His love; these precious possessions are part of what I mean when I say the text is true for us when God says, surely, "I will be with thee." And yet you will probably say, but after all you have not been speaking of God, but of yourself. Well, we speak of the sunlight mostly by its effects upon the earth and sky. We here in England go off to Switzer-



land and speak with delight of the colours which we see there—we never can forget them. Yet there are some, I suppose, more sensitive in their power of sight, who complain of the greens of Switzerland as being too heavy, and they press on to Italy, and there enjoy the greater brightness and brilliancy of the southern sun. Yet, all the while all these are but looking on the earth, or, at best, the sky, and yet they tell us they are living in the enjoyment of the sun. So for us the Second Table of the Commandments is often the way by which we deepen our knowledge of the First. It has a marked practical prominence, both in the words of the apostles and of our Lord. "Thou knowest the commandments," our Lord said to the rich young ruler, "Do not commit adultery, do not kill," and then the rest of the Second Table: "Owe no man anything, but to love one another," "for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law," said the Apostle.

And yet by God's great goodness we Christians can look up higher than this our nature, for we have seen His own nature descend, not to destroy, but to take up humanity into the Godhead, and so our reason seeking back and back for a cause with a stop in it, God helps by the gift of faith; and, having felt after, at last we find God and lay hold of Him, as far as this faculty can. And to our conscience new light is given, which makes indeed the shadow of sin seem darker, but which also gives us that purity of heart which enables us to see God, and with our moral power we lay hold of Him as far as this power can.

And to our love new spheres are open, and all men are found to be not too much for our capacity, when incorporated in the body of Christ, *φιλία* will have *κοινωνία*, and we find the true end of love in the communion with

the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and with mankind in Him in whom God and man are one.

And our will receives new strength from the new example of His love and from His grace, and thus the law of heavenly obedience becomes the pattern of our life on earth, and we pray, "Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven"; and though our will is still some cause for fear, yet it begins to seem, at least, as strong as the cord that binds our body and our soul together here, and we feel the increasing hope that, at least, our will would stand the strain of death rather than in a deliberate and final choice choose wrong for right.

And thus, while our faculties are taken up, the companionship of God becomes a reality of our daily life, and our "exceeding great reward." And then, besides, and with all this, we have the consciousness of communion with the Incarnate Word. "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever"; and being so, we know what to do and where to find Him. He was fond of little children; He "took them in His arms and blessed them." We find Him when we feed His lambs; in teaching, in feeding, in amusing children, we find His presence there. He entered into the social joyfulness of the marriage feast, and when we rejoice with those that rejoice, and help forward the mirth, and all the merry fun of innocent amusement, we feel Him there. He healed the sick, He fed the hungry, wept over and raised the dead; and when we follow His example, we know the refreshment of His companionship. But above all, in His own promised ways, in searching the Scriptures to find Him, where two or three are joined together in prayer, in His most holy Sacrament, here, as far as it can be in this veiled militant kingdom, we are one with Him and He with us—and this,

brethren, is sufficient. It is not yet as clear as it will be hereafter ; it is not yet as clear as we should like to have it, because we have capacities which are not intended to be satisfied here, but they shall be, hereafter. In this life we are to walk by faith. Every life must be a new venture, and requires courage. I leave you here without knowing what changes may yet await you ; I go out myself, indeed, not knowing what may await me.

But this I know—that no changes, not even death itself, need separate us from God ; and, being in union with Him, we shall be in communion with each other. May He then of His goodness reward you for all your goodness to me in the years that are past, and in those which remain may He refresh you with the consciousness of His own presence, and preserve both you and me in His most holy love.

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## THE DEATH OF GENERAL GORDON.

BY THE VERY REV. DEAN BUTCHER, D.D., CHAPLAIN AT  
CAIRO.\*

“And in the time of their trouble, when they cried unto Thee, Thou heardest them from heaven ; and according to Thy manifold mercies Thou gavest them saviours, who saved them out of the hand of their enemies.”  
—NEH. ix. 27.

FOR more than three weeks (ever since that terrible 5th February), I have seen the task I am about to perform grow nearer and nearer. It has to be done, however, that which we prayed so often and so earnestly we might not have to do ; we must speak of Charles Gordon as no

\* Preached in All Saints' Church, Cairo, March 1st, 1885.

longer living in the sense in which *we* are living. We have hoped that some tidings might reach us, showing that at the very last the treachery had failed ; but it is not so. It is too late for us now to help him. We must bow our heads in submission to God's will, and search and try our ways, and consider what this life can teach us.

Let me begin by saying that the idea of Charles Gordon and a panegyric or oration are wholly inconsistent. Rhetoric is the trade and the reward of another class of men. When with us he hated praise ; we will not vex his ghost with it. But he loved from his boyhood to his death to help and benefit his fellow-men, and so he shall help us, please God, to-day ; and send us out of church all the stronger for the thought that he has sojourned with us, and we with him. You will not find me speaking of him as a great saint and hero who is to be copied. All he had came from his Master. The qualities we admire in him were gifts, held in trust from his Captain Christ for a while, and shown to us. Let us think of two of them which shine out above the rest :—

First, then, let him remind us of the gift of simplicity. This generation requires to be reminded of the beauty of this quality more than of any other that I can think of. There is a craving to complicate and overdo everything sacred and secular. The advertising intellect sways the world. Pharisaism, which was once supposed to have a monopoly of matters religious, intrudes on us everywhere and always. We live in modern society, we frequent modern churches, and then we open the Gospels, and ask in blank wonder what connection there is between all this and the story of the Man of Nazareth moving about the Judæan villages, healing and helping the sick and poor. Will the tyranny of fashion and form ever allow us to

be real, and, if we were to attempt it, what would be our fate ?

My friends, the triumphant answer given by Charles Gordon's life is : " You would be the most respected and honoured man of your generation." Never mind what society, or what country, saw that sublime simplicity, it at once felt its power. European diplomatists, Chinese statesmen and generals, Arab chieftains,—all felt that this was something not to be resisted. A force that their weapons were powerless to combat ; a power that their arts could not touch. I say this gives us hope and confidence in the eternal truth of Scripture. Show the world ever so feeble a copy of Christ's simplicity, and it wins all hearts. Even in the lawless Nazareth Christ gained the favour of men ; and in haunts of corruption far darker and more abominable than Nazareth—among the dregs of Asia and Africa, Soudan slave-dealers, and fanatic Taepings—the man who took Christ for a pattern seemed to move like a being of another world ; seemed to bear a charmed life. This is a real solace. We need never fear that Christian simplicity will be unpopular. Virtue goes out of it. What says the Imitation?—" By two wings a man is raised above the earth—by simplicity and purity." They bore the man of whom we are thinking, and they will bear us, if we will have it so.

There is another gift of God that was entrusted to Charles Gordon—a gift of exceeding preciousness—the gift of Hope. He had an energy of spirit that seemed able to bear up against the stress and strain of circumstances the most depressing. His cheerfulness, his never-failing cheerfulness made sunshine in the darkest places. His homely phrases, the originality and ever fresh spring of a fancy that flashed around every trial and obstacle in

a life full of trials and obstacles with a gleam like that of summer lightning—who can think of these things without saying these flowers were not of man's planting?

No, my friends; not of earth. "And now, Lord, what is my hope? Truly my hope is even in Thee." Because he hoped and trusted so thoroughly in God, his hope was a source of strength to every one. From the deep fount and well-head of his trust, runnels and rivulets flowed out to all who approached him. There is a striking legend of St. Francis of Assisi, which says that Jesus Christ appeared to him in glory, holding a cup, and said, "Go, visit the brethren of thy order, and give them to drink of this cup of the Spirit of Life." Only a few drank freely and spilled none. But those who did so became at once resplendent as the sun. Such a brightness, such a power, such a glow and fulness of spiritual life Gordon had. The strength was ever ready for the day. Indeed, there seemed a positive excess and exuberance of energy, cheerfulness, and force. We all felt this so strongly that it seemed impossible that he could perish—I will not say *fail*, for he has *not* failed. No! what one thinks of is the long months during which that splendid hopefulness never lost the warmth and glow that it borrowed from the undaunted heart it dwelt in. As day after day closed, and the days grew to weeks, and the weeks to months, strong as a pillar, bright as the flame of a watch-fire, he stood. Alas!

"Now is the stately column broke,  
The beacon-light is quenched in smoke;  
The trumpet's silver voice is still,  
The warder silent on the hill."

The requiem uttered by Scott is true of Scott's great countryman!



The times in which we live are full of warnings. I am not one of those who pretend to see a judgment in every political event, or an Armageddon in every battle ; but I do believe God governs this world of ours by certain laws. And God has shown us this man to help us in our need, and to shame us with ourselves. Just as when all the higher virtues were dying out under the rich and powerful tradesmen of Italy, there was raised up the noble Francis of Assisi, the herald of the great God, so Gordon was raised up. Just as at the most corrupt time of French history, in the midst of servile courtesies and greedy priests, there was raised up the engineer Sebastien Vauban to press on the king his duties to the people, so Gordon was raised up to show to a cynical and sensuous age the power of the old, Christ-like virtues,—simplicity and hopefulness !

But remember, we are free to reject or to receive the message ; and if we deliberately refuse to acknowledge the Sender, no more envoys of God will be sent. If a nation persists in preferring demagogues and placemen, demagogues and placemen it will have in plenty. But I cannot and will not believe that this will be the case with us. The old text is still true—"Thou gavest them *saviours*," men who forgot themselves in devotion to duty ; men who merged all love of party in the love of God. These men were given to believing Israel. These men will be given to us, if we show that we want them, and cast our meaner idols down. It has been said that you might as well try to get lightning out of incense smoke as to get life out of modern religion ; but this we will not, we need not, we dare not think. "To believe in the heroic makes heroes." To believe in Christ makes—*cr should* make—Christians.

I must end. Perhaps some of you are thinking that, at a time like this, we should have Lenten preaching, and that it is out of place to speak here of modern people, and events going on in the outside world. I am afraid I cannot sympathise with those who think that sermons are only preached in church. There was rather an impressive sermon preached once on the wall of a certain banquet-hall, consisting of the words, "*Mene, mene, tekel, Upharsin.*" Well, those words are written for us now in letters of blood. And if you want a Lent lecture, take one of the sentences from the Communion Service, read on the first day of Lent, and apply it to nations as well as to individuals: "Cursed is he that putteth his trust in man, and taketh man for his defence, and in his heart goeth from the Lord."

We have been doing this in the worldly world by *carelessness*, in the ecclesiastical world by *formalism*, in the great world outside of fashion and the church by blank infidelity. Do not let me say, "Take Gordon as your model"; but take his Master as your model, and by simplicity and hope—hope elevated into faith—rise to your duties, and be well assured that we shall find heroes and heroines to carry us through our difficulties—saviours, who will conquer by patriotic endeavour, because they trust in the great Saviour, our Captain and King, Christ.

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## X II. *Expository Section.*



### I. INTERCOURSE WITH CHRIST.

BY THE REV. JAMES CULROSS, M.A., D.D., PRESIDENT OF THE  
BRISTOL BAPTIST COLLEGE.\*

“I bow my knees (or pray) that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith.”—EPHES. iii. 17.

It was once possible to have intercourse with Jesus Christ in an outward way, as you and I may have fellowship with our friends. The disciples had such intercourse with Him for years ; they heard Him, they saw Him ; they were His companions ; they ate and drank with Him ; they abode with Him under the same roof ; they went about with Him ; and had intercourse with Him after an outward and bodily fashion. When He ascended to the right hand of God, that form of intercourse came to an end, and henceforward their intercourse with Him was through faith ; henceforward their senses could give them no information about Him, could be no help to them ; henceforward Jesus Christ was to them the object of faith ; and as the object of faith He was greater to them than He had been when He went about with them, and they were His companions day by day. Indeed, it was not till the veil was rent, it was not till the crucifixion, that they came fully to understand who had been in their midst.

Now, what it was with the disciples after the ascension, so it is with us to-day. Our intercourse with Jesus Christ is to be the intercourse of faith. We do not see Him, we do not hear Him, none of our senses give us any informa-

\* Preached at Tyndale Chapel, Bristol, March 1st, 1885.

tion about Him. We could not bear to look with these mortal eyes even on the skirts of His glory. He is the object of faith to us ; His existence, His nearness, His glory, His power, His love—all are known to us, realized by us through faith. All our transactions with Him must be transactions of faith. Well, what kind of nearness is it possible to have with Jesus Christ through faith ? The New Testament answers, the greatest, the most vital. By faith I receive Him as my Saviour ; by faith I commit myself into His hands for both worlds ; by faith I say, " He loved me, and gave Himself for me " ; by faith I walk with Him and enjoy His daily fellowship and guidance ; by faith I expect to share with Him hereafter, as an " heir of God and a joint heir with Christ." It is not necessary to say more in order to show how great, how various, and how blissful are the transactions open to us with Jesus Christ through faith.

The special thought presented in the line that we have read together from this Epistle this morning, is that of Christ dwelling in the heart by faith. It is no uncommon expression this, in the New Testament. On the contrary, in one form or other it appears again and again to us. For example, the Apostle Paul describes his conversion in this manner, " It pleased God to reveal His Son *in me* " ; he describes that mystery whose glorious riches he disclosed to the Gentiles, he describes it as " Christ *in you* the hope of glory." You remember, too, how our Saviour Himself prays in His great high-priestly prayer before the crucifixion, prays on behalf of His disciples that " the love wherewith Thou hast loved me, may be in them and I in them." These are specimens of passages from other parts of the New Testament, in which the same thought appears as in this line. True religion begins when Christ is welcomed

into a human heart; and true religion consists very largely in Christ abiding and ruling in the heart into which He is welcomed. The most that can be said, perhaps, of some is that their Christ is in their creed. His name occurs in the Creed, and in the proper place, too, in the creed that they subscribe to, but that name is no more to them than the name of some dead man that occurs in the title-deeds by which they hold some piece of property; He is in their creed, but nowhere else. The most again that can be said of others is that they have Christ on their lips; they talk about Him a great deal; on their lips, but you do not find Him anywhere else. You do not find Him in their business, you do not find Him in the midst of their affections. The most again that may be said, perhaps, of some other men is that they have Christ in their heads, possessing a kind of abstract knowledge of Him; they can reason and dispute about Him, but the living Christ Himself is absolutely nothing to them; He has never entered in among their affections and their joys; He has never become a welcome guest in their bosom; He has never made them glad.

Now the prayer that the Apostle presents here, on behalf of his Ephesian friends, is that Christ may dwell in their hearts. "In your hearts." In the central region of your moral life; he means that region in which thought springs up; in the region of affection and desire; in the region of our motives; in the region in which purposes are formed, in which future actions have their birth; in the region of love, joy, sorrow, hope, trust, aspiration—may Christ dwell there. Whosoever is lord of a human heart, is lord of that human life. If Christ is Lord of my heart, He is Lord of my hands, He is Lord of my lips, Lord of my whole being. "May Christ, then, dwell in your heart,"

Paul prays, "dwell there by faith." *Himself*, not merely may His *mind*, "the mind that was in Christ be in you"; not merely may His *likeness* be seen in you, some resemblance to Him, but may *He* dwell in you *Himself*, somehow or other, with His own holy, gracious, blissful presence! "May He *dwell* in your hearts"; not paying a visit now and then, like a wayfaring man that turns aside to tarry for a night, but may He abide with you, even when you are not thinking directly of Him, even when the mind may not be at all conscious, momentarily, of His presence, still, may His presence there, in the very background of thought, give a character to your whole life and being; may He make His abode within you. Take an illustration from a common enough case. You walk along some unknown part of the country, some part that is new to you. In passing along you notice a cottage by the wayside with the honeysuckle and roses about it; you are struck with its beauty; you ask whose it is, and are told that it is the property of Lord So-and-So, but he does not dwell there, he does not abide there, although it is his property. So our hearts may belong to Jesus Christ, but there may be no manifestation of His presence and power within our hearts continually.

The conception is not a difficult one to lay hold of; we are helped to it by similar passages to this, scattered all through the New Testament. You remember the Apostle Paul in one place says, in writing to his friends, "I have you in my heart." He says again, writing to others, "Ye are in my heart." We have no difficulty in understanding what he means when he says that.

Take a case from ordinary life. A widowed mother lives in a cottage by the sea; her only boy is a sailor; she has not seen him for years, for years he has been far away



sailing from land to land, and she has not set her eyes on him for years ; but her heart is full of him ; she thinks of him by day, she dreams of him by night ; how tenderly she handles every relic that he left behind him when he went away ; how the glass in her spectacles grows dim as she reads his letters ; his name is never missed out from her prayers ; and many a time when she is busy about her daily work the thought of her boy will flash into her heart like a beam of golden sunlight ; the stars speak about him, the winds speak about him, the waves speak about him, and so does every white-sailed ship away out on the sea. Nobody has any difficulty in understanding what is meant when it is said that her boy dwells in her heart. So may Christ dwell in your hearts, the object of trust, of affection, of allegiance.

When Christ enters into the human heart to dwell in it, evil tenants must go out. He dwells with the lowly, but not with the impure. Evil tenants have to go out ; His presence is inconsistent with sinful frivolity and folly, with selfishness, with pride, with lust, and so on, other evil tenants that may have been in the heart before. One reason why sometimes we do not wish to have Christ dwelling in our heart is that we do not wish to part with guests that we have already taken in, and whose society we like. It may be that some one is deaf to the knocking of Christ at the door of his heart ; is deaf to the voice of Christ because he is involved in some worldly entanglements ; because he is in love with something that is inconsistent with the Divine love and with the will of God. And the proverb says there is nobody so deaf as the man who won't hear, and so the voice of Christ knocking at the door of the human heart is oftentimes unheard, because men do not wish to hear Him.

Well now, Christ makes no secret of it (and it is well that everybody should understand it), but openly announces His purpose, that He will cast out evil tenants from the heart into which He enters, however welcome those evil tenants may have been made by us. We do preach sometimes a kind of soft gospel about a "happy land, far, far away," but Christ, in the very outset, comes to let us know that, if we take Him into our hearts, there must be self-denial. He comes into a congregation like this perhaps, and, instead of talking about the promises of pleasantness, of ease, and so on, He makes this kind of appeal to us—and I think it draws out what is noblest and loftiest in the Christian heart—"Who will die for me? Who will suffer for me? Who will die at my command?" He goes that length. Anyhow, He makes it known, makes no secret of it, that He will cast out evil tenants from the bosom into which He enters, however welcome they may have been made by us. It is quite true, and not to be forgotten, that Christ's indwelling in the human heart is not inconsistent with any pure enjoyment. As truly as He comes to offer comfort to the sad and sorrowful, as truly as He comes to give light to them that are in darkness, so truly does He come to them that are glad, bidding them let Him in among their joys, that He may give them to know a loftier and more blissful joy than they have ever dreamed of yet.

Now if Christ comes into a heart to dwell, casting out evil tenants, He does not come alone; He comes and brings with Him all those things that accompany salvation. I would just name three things by way of example. When Christ dwells in the human heart, He dwells there as a living power, not merely attracting all our other affections, but He is in us a living power, moving, renewing, sancti-

fyng, moulding us according to His own idea, working His own pleasure in us, making men faithful in their daily business, true, righteous, strong for their daily service, for labour, for suffering, for sorrow, for waiting, for whatever Providence may appoint in the life of any one of us; in the heart as a power fortifying against the temptations that beset men, the temptations of daily life, the temptations to meanness, temptations to untruthfulness, temptations to selfishness, no matter what kind or of what measure it may be, fortifying us against temptation, subduing evil desires and propensities, calming all unholy thoughts and desires. Just as we take Him in and make Him welcome, His power operates in such directions. Just as on that stormy night on the Sea of Galilee He said to the winds and waves, "Peace, be still," so He calms distractions and tumults in the breast into which He enters. He is in us as a living power, strengthening us for the heavenly Father's will, forming in us a character of nobleness and truth, lifting up our life above its old levels, enabling us to fight the good fight of faith, making us more than conquerors through His own life. The Apostle Paul understood this matter when he said, "I can do all things through Christ strengthening me." That is one thing that comes about—I cannot explain how it comes about—but it does come about when Christ abides by faith in a human heart; we find a new power within us against evil, and *for* truth and righteousness.

Then again, when Christ enters a human heart to dwell there, He enters it and abides as an undying joy. No sooner does Christ enter than joy begins. It removes those old dreads and disquietudes of conscience that were occasioned by the sense of guilt, and He sheds abroad within us a sense of reconciliation to God, and an

assurance of Almighty keeping, and that gladdens. It is, to a very large extent, independent of temporal surroundings; it certainly does not need a man basking in the sunshine of worldly prosperity to find that Christ is joy to him. It needs only a stricken Lazarus, or a forgiven Magdalen, or a dying thief, a man hated of this world for God's sake, accounted as the filth of the world, the offscouring of all things. Outside there may be poverty, the chill east wind, the weary way of the wilderness, a dull, gloomy sky, dislike, even contempt, from men; but within—if Christ rules within—there is a quiet gladness, for when Christ enters, He enters whose presence makes men glad, and with Him come in pure thoughts, high desires, regulations of holy life, a peace that in very deed passeth all understanding. And it is a strange thing, too, that when Christ is in the heart, He somehow throws radiance over all that is round about us, brings light and beauty and gladness on things round about us. We all know this, that we make the world in which we dwell. Suppose a man goes out in the morning, full of hope, goes out on some business, and comes back a few hours later disappointed; what a gloom rests on all around about him. And yet the outward scene is the same in the coming back as in the going away; the difference is in the man's mood of mind. We *make* the world in which we dwell. And so with Christ ruling in us, the lowliest earthly dwelling becomes a kind of waiting-room to the palace of glory. Sorrow is transfigured to the heart that holds Him in it. The bounties of Providence all come to us with sweeter relish; the commonest cup of earthly comfort has a truly celestial flavour in it; the most ordinary sights, that seem commonplace or even worn out, are invested with a new charm; the starry

magnificence of night has a loftier and calmer grandeur about it ; and the very heavens seem to bend more shelteringly and more graciously over us. So it comes about when Christ abides within a human heart.

Just one other thing I would name. When Christ abides in a human heart, He is in it as an immortal hope. I cannot stay, for want of time, over this matter now, but I think the whole thing is contained in that verse so familiar to every one of us, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him ; for we shall see Him as He is." We, with these weeping eyes, with these sorrowed heads, we shall be like Him, at whose glorified feet creation worships ; "we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is."

That, then, is the prayer that Paul presents on behalf of his Christian brethren and friends at Ephesus, that "Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith." Christ asks entrance into human hearts. He is going about to-day by His providence, by His Gospel, and knocking at the door of human hearts. If there is a heart here whose door has hitherto been shut against Him, if you have never bid Him come in, I remind you that He stands at the door of your heart, He knocks, desiring entrance. When God built the human heart, He built it after the similitude of a palace ; a great, wonderful, many-chambered palace, with a chamber of understanding in it, the chamber of the affections, the chamber of imagination, the chamber of memory, the chamber of hope, the chamber of conscience. He seeks entrance into the human heart, and if you bid Him come in, throw open every chamber to Him, every chamber of that many-chambered heart. It is no small, narrow, mean place into which He seeks

to enter, but a great and many-chambered palace ; throw the door open to Him. And those secret chambers into which no human eye is allowed to look, into which you do not like to look yourself when you have locked the door and hidden the key, just in case you yourself might be tempted to look in sometimes,—those chambers that you do not like to open, throw them all open to the Saviour. He stands, He says, “ I stand at the door and knock.” And I would specially make appeal to those before whom life is just opening,—

“ Open, O happy young,  
And let Him in ;  
Open, O happy young,  
Ere yet the Hand that knocks,  
Weary, at last forbear.”

\* \* \* \*

Open and take Him in who comes to sup with you. “ Be- hold,” He says, “ I stand at the door and knock.”

## THE FIRST CHAPTER OF EPHESIANS.

BY REV. C. H. SPURGEON.\*

As I have often remarked, in this Epistle will be found a complete volume of theology. Let any man who desires to be cunning in theology take this letter to the Ephesians. Every line is weighty. You have all the doctrines of grace in the first chapter, the experience of grace in the succeeding, and the practical beauties of Christianity in the latter chapters.

*Ver. 1.*—Saints—that is their character, faithful or believing—that is the root of their character. They

\* Delivered at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, July 15th, 1883.



are believers in Jesus Christ, and they become saintly in life. To them the Apostle says: "Grace be to you and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ."

Oh, that we may enjoy this benediction! May grace blot out our sins, supply our wants, help our infirmity, strengthen and perfect our character! And there may a deep peace grow out of faith—peace with God, peace with man, that peace of God which passeth all understanding. May we have grace and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

*Vers. 3-4.*—Here is the first doctrine, the doctrine of the choice of God's people. What it was—before the foundation of the world. How it was—it was the choice of Christ. What was the object of it—that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love. Learn well this doctrine of election, springing out of this river of mercy and grace. He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love. You will find many who abhor this doctrine, others who slight it and despise it. As for us, if we have any understanding of God's Word, we see it to be here, and we have learned to rejoice in it.

*Ver. 5.*—The chosen are adopted. They are the objects of God's choice, and thus He binds them to Himself by making them His children. 5th verse again. He takes them out of the family of sin and brings them into His own household. In the prophets, "How shall I put thee among the children?" He asks; but He does it, and makes us one with Christ, and co-heirs with Him. In this phrase we read that it is according to the good pleasure of God's will, not man's. We have heard a great deal

about free-will, perhaps too much. I like to hear more about the will of God, for *He* is to have a will too. The best, the holiest, the greatest of all wills; shall His will go for nothing? It is not so according to the teaching of the Spirit, for everything here is according to the pleasure of His will.

*Ver. 6.*—One of the works of Christ is to make us accept the greatness of the grace of God. So that men may wonder at it and trust it. Do not think that God is selfish. Now, when men are brought to trust the grace of God, it is a sign that they are right; then they come into their right condition. *It is for man's good* that God should be glorified. When His grace is put into the background man is out of order with everything; but when he has learned to trust the glory of the grace of God, then he has got back into his true position. God gives us true faith and higher wonder at the matchless love which has made us what we are. We are made children, accepted in the Beloved who heard us afar off.

*Ver. 7.*—Here is another glorious doctrine, the doctrine of redemption by blood, and the pardon of sins that goes with it—a pardon not according to the greatness of the sins, but a pardon according to the riches of His grace, an infinite pardon for ever, blotting out the sins we have committed. Oh, let our hearts rejoice in redemption! If election is a great fact, if adoption is a wonderful subject, if the grace of God is a deep sea, what is this doctrine, this glorious doctrine of redemption?

*Ver. 8.*—Here is something to think of. The wisdom and prudence of His plan of salvation, and the manner in which He revealed it. God revealed it little by little, for as weak eyes, long shut up in darkness, cannot bear the

full glare of the sunlight, but must be accustomed by degrees to the brightness of the sun, so we might have lost our reason if the revelation had burst upon us all at once.

*Ver. 9.*—"Having made known unto us the mystery of His will."

That is another word worth considering, the mystery of His will.

*Vers. 9 and 10.*—Here we come again to the shores of a great deep, a gathering-up of everything in heaven and earth into the person and work of our great Redeemer, who loves them all; all the centres of their interests wrapped up in Christ. Blessed be the Lord who has revealed it to us!

*Ver. 11.*—"In whom also we have obtained an inheritance."

It is not "we shall have it," but we have got it.

*Vers. 11 and 12.*—You notice how frequently the phrase occurs "according to this" and "according to that." God works to a scale. There is wisdom and prudence, and then comes out a perfect harmony, one truth leading to another truth, one note made to harmonise with another, the whole producing a marvellous *Te Deum* of everlasting praise. See again how he puts it concerning the will of God. You have the phrase "According to His will," then you have it a second time, and now you have it "According to the counsel of His will." What a delightful thing this will is! It is the basis of all good done in the world, and by it we pray, "Thy will be done on earth, as it is in Heaven."

*Vers. 13 and 14.*—Beloved, he tells us that we have an inheritance, and we have it by virtue of an earnest which the Spirit of God has given us. The indwelling of the

Holy Ghost in believers is a part of heaven ; and we have to look at it as an earnest of the whole. When a man takes a house he receives a key ; with that key he stands possessed of it. So the Holy Ghost, who is the key of everlasting glory, is given into the hands of every believer, to whom He is an earnest of endless felicity. Wherefore let us be glad this morning, and praise the word of God.

*Vers. 15, 16, and 17.*—Oh, what a prayer to pray ! May God fulfil it to each one of you, dear friends, that you may have the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him. It is not to know about Him, but to know Him. It is the spirit in which a man can have acquaintance with God, fellowship with Christ.

*Ver. 18.*—"The eyes of your understanding being enlightened."

You have got eyes, your understanding has received light, but those eyes still need to be enlightened. The best eyes cannot see in the dark. We must have light. God, give it to us !

*Vers. 18, 19, 20, 21, and 22 down to* "And hath put all things under His feet."

Now, we cannot help stopping a minute at this. What that power must be which not only raised Christ from the dead, but set Him at the right hand of God, and gave Him dominion over all things, and put them at His feet ! Now, that same mighty power is descended upon us, upon you and me, if we believed in Christ ; and nothing short of that power can raise us from our sins and make us kings over our own passions and over the power of darkness. O Thou God, what a power is a redeemed man ! It was seen, O Father, in my redemption, when all the power that Thou didst exercise upon Thy Begotten was

exercised upon me, who was raised on a dunghill. We cannot help stopping here to reflect.

*Vers. 22 and 23.*—Oh, the links between Christ and His people! What would a head be without a body? A ghastly thing. But thanks be to God, we are the body of Christ, the complement of Christ, the fulness of Him. What a magnificent thing, what a Divine thought that we here shall be uplifted and magnified in His glory. Amen.

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### *III. Sermon to the Young.*

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#### SOUL MURDER.

BY HELY HUTCHINSON ALMOND, M.A., BALLIOL COLLEGE,  
OXFORD, HEADMASTER OF LORETTO SCHOOL, MUSSELBURGH.\*

“Then said He unto the disciples, It is impossible but that offences will come, but woe unto him through whom they come! It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.”—LUKE xvii. 1, 2.

“But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in Me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.”—MATT. xviii. 6.

TERROR cannot save the soul. There is one guide only to the city of Eternal Refuge, and His name is Love.

Let us suppose that all excuse for unbelief or indifference were removed, that the realities of a future state were such as could be made evident to sense, and that hell were to yawn before men's eyes in terrible and vivid detail—would the mere dread of punishment be any

\* Preached in Loretto School Chapel, January 11th, 1885.

evidence of that holiness of heart without which no man can see the Lord?

The answer of reason and of Scripture is plain; and, as a fact, conversion by intimidation has been a failure.

Perhaps the most real and intense of all great poems is the "Inferno" of the Florentine poet Dante. The people of Verona, when they saw him in the streets, used to say, "See, there is the man who was in hell." He no more doubts of the "City of Dis," with its ceaseless showers of fiery snow without wind, its living souls embedded in tombs of burning marl, or engulfed in lakes of seething pitch, or everlasting ice, than we doubt the bubbling lava of Vesuvius. And it was the creed of his age. The frescoes and the sculptures of the churches, the sermons of the priests, depicted with like terrible minuteness not only the sufferings of the lost, but the agonies, laughing to scorn in intensity and duration the infernal ingenuity of pious inquisitors, which awaited even the ransomed soul in purgatory for every repented sin. And what was the end of this?

An age of infamy and atheism unparalleled in Christian times, the age of the Borgias, the age of wholesale poisonings, the age of the festering elegance of revived Paganism, an age when priests jested over the mass, and the few voices which protested against the iniquities of the times were silenced by torture and death.

And again, you must have heard of the Methodist revival about one hundred years ago. It was a great work, and to the enthusiasm of its leaders, Wesley and Whitefield, we owe in great measure that still deepening and broadening spirit of Christian philanthropy, which is our one chance of national salvation. And yet, this movement, like later revivals, was marred



by its terrorism. "The terrors of judgment, and the agonies of hell," says an accurate historian, "were the almost constant subjects of his preaching, and he dwelt upon them till he scared his hearers to the verge of insanity. Many fell to the ground convulsed with paroxysms of agony. Some lay without sense or motion, others trembled exceedingly, or rent the air with piercing screams, which continued for hours without intermissions."

Now open the Gospels. What a contrast! We seem to have left the turbid streams of some black country, scarred and seared by man's well-meant improvements, and to have climbed up where the clear fountain-head comes welling from the rock.

Christ does not draw men to Himself by terrorism, but by love. He called every one of His disciples quietly, peacefully, lovingly. And though He blinded, and with a lightning flash, yet along with the stroke and the blindness came the consolation and the peace.

There is not an instance in the New Testament of a convert made after the manner of Christian in the "Pilgrim's Progress," driven to distraction, dreaming hideous dreams, and uttering lamentable cries. Christ's kingdom is not a tyranny. His throne does not rest on the forced allegiance of trembling slaves. It is the supreme type of lawful royalty, it stands broad-based upon His people's will!

But though Christ does not try to frighten men into repentance, He never conceals or glosses over the severity of His judgments against sin in this life and in the life to come. It is against those, however, whom, like some of the Pharisees, He regards as incurable, that He utters the thunders of His wrath. There times in St. Matthew's Gospel He calls them serpents. In the biology of the

spiritual world, they are already ranking with the evil spirits. It is impossible, He says, that they can escape the damnation of hell. And it is observable that in the only place where He borders on detail about future punishment—viz., the parable of Dives and Lazarus, which comes just before our text in St. Luke's Gospel—He expressly says that the threat of it is useless. Dives, though he could "a tale unfold, whose lightest word would harrow up their souls," is forbidden to send his brethren a warning from the world of the departed. "If they hear not Moses and the Prophets" (by whom, mark you, future punishment is never presented as a motive of action) "neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."

Dives was an average man of the world, a pitiable creature, whose chief interests in life were his money, and his table, and his clothes, and his society. He had committed no great *crime*; his sins were negative. And note, that Abraham speaks to him as "son." He shows signs of the softening effect of punishment. We cannot look upon him as beyond the mercy of Him who went down into hell and preached to the spirits in prison.

And then Christ's thoughts seem naturally to pass from the selfish, careless sinner to a darker phase of guilt,—the fatal fascination, and the damning power which soul has over soul. Better, He says, the heavy millstone and the cold gurgling depths of the unfathomable sea; better the less terrible hereafter of the less tainted soul, than that it should incur the crowning guilt of spiritual murder.

It is not for us to limit the possible range of God's restoring mercy. But what do facts tell us? Nay, what does fiction tell us (for fiction dare only reflect the light of fact) of any hopes of reformation in this world for the

arch-tempter's delegates—those who ply their victims with drink, that they may mock at their degradation ; for the cold-blooded seducers ; the touts of gambling-hells ; the smiling, damned villain who pours into the innocent ear the leprous distilment of his vile suggestiveness, or lures unsuspecting simplicity to ruin under the mask of good fellowship and geniality ?

Are such men curable in fiction or in fact ?

Dare Dickens have restored the educating demons of his den of thieves, or Scott his Varney or Dalgarno, or George Eliot her Grandcourt, or Thackeray his Marquis of Steyne or Lord Hellborough to repentance, or even to remorse ?

I fear that such a transformation would stamp their fictions as untrue to life. They may invest such characters, if they please, with all the external charms of grace and dignity ; for though there are hideous shapes among the fiends, yet Milton's master-fiend is no loathsome-looking reptile, but—

“ Created aloft and carbuncle his eye,  
With burnished neck of verdant gold, erect  
Amid his circling spires, that on the grass  
Floated redundant. *Pleasing was his shape and lovely.*”

Yes, it is the case, and some of my older hearers must have known instances, that when a man's inner nature becomes so impregnated with poison as to become actively contagious, he may actually gain in attractiveness, though he has become corrupt beyond redemption.

Surely, there are deep lessons for us here, lessons of caution and warning, such as Christ gave to His disciples. Yet, there was a Judas among them. So there may conceivably be a wicked boy in a school, already beyond reach of warning. Conceivably, I say, not probably. It

is seldom that there is such full-blown wickedness as I have been speaking of in the early stages of moral consciousness. Yet I have known some boys, and more men, of whom, if I had heard that they had turned out good men, I would have felt awestruck, as in the presence of a miracle. And though the Spirit of God may brood over the chaos of a ruined soul, and quicken it by a fresh creation of His own marvellous light, yet we may say that those who have deliberately given themselves over to Satan's special work of soul murder, are, humanly speaking, beyond hope and beyond redemption.

What! you say, can a merciful God—?

The only answer is that of fact. What, *does* a merciful God, by the operation of His doubtless wise and necessary laws, do every day in nature? Are the wages of sin never fully earned? Has drink no craving, no delirium? Has gluttony no pangs? Has lust no wasting, no mania, no rottenness, which are incurable?

And, surely, there is a parable in the great tragedy, when the king and queen drink of the poisoned cup, and Laertes is stabbed with the poisoned rapier. So does the foul practice of the soul turn upon itself; side by side with the murdered victim lies the self-poisoned corpse of conscience; and when the organ of spiritual life is dead a man can no more spiritually live than he can breathe without a lung.

Do you ask, any of you, can this be the case with you? No, it cannot be the case, if you ask. The very fact of such anxiety is a proof that God's Spirit has not ceased to strive with you. You have not attained to the deliberate crime of—shall I call him man or fiend incarnate, who said of an innocent girl (the story is a true one), "I'll trip her into hell"? and so he did—and himself into a

deeper hell ! Yes, but I fear that at schools, as in the world, there is a great deal of thoughtless, swaggering practice for Satan's favourite game of soul ruin. And I wish to impress on you, that a condition of this sport is, that you cannot trip another ever so little down the slippery incline, without tripping yourselves further down.

Is my meaning plain to you ? If not, I will make it plainer. This is no place for mincing words. If you teach another to do what is wrong, you are doing yourself even more harm than you are doing him. If you sap the virtue, or sneer at the faith of one who is innocent, or childlike, or confiding ; if you give him lessons in falsehood, or impurity, or dishonesty ; if you teach him by your example to ridicule sacred things, and the net result of your teaching is that his soul is ruined,—his blood is upon your head, and rather than that you should do these things knowingly and deliberately, the millstone would be a mercy.

I think you understand me now. But pray do not go away with the idea that the text has nothing to do with you, because you shudder at the thought of such wickedness as I have been describing.

For just as fiendish, wilful injury is more common among men, because, as I said, Satan has very seldom taken final possession of a boy, so I think that thoughtless, casual injury is more often done by boys to the souls, as well as to the bodies and feelings of other boys.

You know that none but a very bad man would deliberately swear before a young boy, or say anything to set him against doing his duty at school, or against his religious belief, or against obeying his parents. And you know also that boys are not nearly as careful in this way as men are, because they are more thoughtless, and

do not see, as much as men do, the real meaning and effects of their actions. But do you not feel how near you are to a very terrible precipice, if you do or say anything to blunt another's conscience, or weaken his sense of duty, if you, *e.g.*, jeer at conscientious scruples which you do not share, if you make sarcastic remarks or side-long allusions, because another boy works harder than the average, or reads his Bible more, or is longer upon his knees than the average, or keeps clear of any loose language or slack conduct which happen to be in vogue?

I need not multiply instances. You can do this for yourselves. Judge yourselves, that you be not judged of God. And pray to the source of all light, that He will let you see things as they really are, and to the Giver of all grace, that He will keep you from being one of those of whom it is said, "It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea."

So far I have been pursuing the train of thought suggested by St. Luke's setting of the text. But it was our Lord's habit to present His great strong sayings in various lights. And as, in St. Luke's Gospel, the predominant colour, so to speak, which surrounds our text, is that of warning, so in St. Matthew's it is that of sympathy. But the two are always blended. The black thundercloud of His wrath may indeed stand out abruptly from the tender depths beyond, but in the clear sky of His teaching the red glow of warning melts imperceptibly into the golden light of love.

So in the beautiful narrative which formed part of the second lesson there is both love and warning, but more love. It is very near the sun.



The glories of the Transfiguration were fresh in the memory of the disciples. The coming kingdom, and their own share in it, were the chief subjects of their thoughts and conversation. They were like a group of expectant politicians. It was a settled point that they were to be the great officers of state, but who was to be Christ's prime minister?

The question revealed a state of mind on which explanation would have been thrown away. Before Calvary and Pentecost, they could no more comprehend Christ's kingdom than a blind man can comprehend colours, or a mean man nobility of soul.

Our Lord could answer only by a fact. He had presented to them a vision of its future glories, so now He would show them its starting point.

He calls to Him a little child. There, He said, in that child's heart, My kingdom already *is*. There I, the lowly Son of man, am reigning, supreme Lord of the yet stainless conscience.

The inner voice which tells that child of right and wrong is the voice of my Almighty Spirit. The ties of kindred between that innocent soul and the pure angels who see my Father's face are yet unbroken.

“ . . . Not in utter nakedness,  
But trailing clouds of glory do we come  
From God, who is our home.  
Heaven lies about us in our infancy.”

But the child is not only a fact ; he is a type. Before we can enter Christ's kingdom, we must all become as little children. Wherever in any one, young or old, the voice of conscience—*i.e.*, of Christ's Spirit—is asserting itself as rightful monarch of the soul ; wherever the bias of the will, however feebly, is on the side of purity and

truth and goodness, *there* is one of Christ's little ones which believe on Him.

And can we wonder that He, who knew the power of temptation, who realized the infinite issues at stake for every human soul, was moved by His Divine compassion then to utter that most bitter and terrible of all His sayings: "But whoso shall offend one of these little ones, which believe in Me, it were better for Him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea"?

Yes, by compassion, by pity, and by love, rather than by anger. For He was not threatening His disciples. His soul was yearning for that child, for all young children, for all His weak and tempted children, to the end of time.

And shall He not best so move boyhood? You who are often hardened by threats and deaf to warnings, you who so often heedlessly neglect your own best interests for the passing whim or pleasure of the hour, there is yet something within you to which an appeal is not in vain; something which tells, if you will consider it, of the ancestral dignity of your immortal spirits. It does not appear upon the surface of your lives; you may, if you will, starve it, or strangle it, or poison it before you reach the maturity of your manhood; but let some great trouble or emotion touch the spring, and you are confronted by a mysterious presence within your consciousness—you have an instinctive sense of the Divine.

It is to this that reverence appeals when she bends the knee, and purity appeals when she veils her face, and truth when she will not keep silence, and sorrow when she points heavenward from among her tears; it is this, which, if only for a time, asserts its royal rights over

giddy thoughtlessness and narrower aims, and meaner motives, and baser appetites, when drawn forth from its hiding place, and seated upon its throne by the prevailing might of sympathy.

Christ placed a little child among His disciples. And so I may say to almost all of you, to all of you who are old enough to enter into these words of mine, that, in a sense, He places children among you ; some over whom you have authority or influence, some who are younger or weaker, or more ignorant of evil than ourselves.

Think of them. For the moment set yourselves aside. Picture to yourselves the possibilities of those young lives —what blessings, what wrecks they may become ! And then, will you, for very pity's sake, do anything to hurt the diviner part of one of these little ones ?

You would not wilfully hurt their bodies. You would not torture, or maim, or infect with disease, or do anything to weaken the proof by one individual instance ; that robustness is not inconsistent with refinement, and that a civilized age need not be dyspeptic or deformed by marring the future outward perfection of their manhood. And will you commit a much more cruel wrong ? Will you maim or stunt or mar their diviner part ? None of you, I firmly trust, would wantonly do the devil's work by teaching lies to the true, obscenity to the pure, or scoffs to the believing. But do you never do any harm by your vanity or thoughtlessness ? Do you never air your worldly wisdom or your wit without thinking what will be the effect on those who hear your random talk ? Do you never fling easy sarcasms at dull industry, or damp enthusiasm with a sneer, or weaken the sense of duty or honour by displaying before others the contemptible swagger of affected disloyalty or boastful disobedience.

Oh, if you have done any of these things—and which of us can say that in such respects he is free from blame?—is it not pitiable to think of the harm, unknown to us, which may have been done to others? And let us pray God that He will pardon what has been amiss, and that He will give us grace so to regulate our intercourse with one another that, instead of being as a millstone, to sink us down, it shall be as wings to waft us up; where we shall serve Him with a nobler service; where, like the angels, His little ones shall see His face; where they that turn many to righteousness shall shine like the stars for ever and ever.

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## *IV. Outline Sermons.*

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### THE EIGHTEEN SILENT YEARS.

BY THE REV. JOHN BROWN, M.A., DIOCESAN INSPECTOR OF SCHOOLS, TRURO.\*

“And He went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but His mother kept all these sayings in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.”—LUKE ii. 51, 52.

IN these two verses is written the history of eighteen years. We have no other record of all that lies between the finding in the Temple and the baptism of our Lord Jesus Christ (comp. chap. ii. 42 with chap. iii. 23). These eighteen years are of immeasurable importance in any human life. They cover the period when human nature is most impressionable,

\* Preached in St. James', Nottingham, January 18th, 1885.

most receptive, most plastic. The seeds of all future production are sown then. Year by year, month by month, day by day, the life is built up—life physical, moral, spiritual. By processes slow but sure, never to be undone, by steps never to be retraced, development is gained, the coil of life is lengthened and unwound. At thirty the man's character is formed. What he will be in the future depends on what he is then. Now it is the history of this time—all-important—that St. Luke describes in these verses "obscurely bright"; revealing, yet enveloping in sacred and profound mystery. And the mystery is unspeakably increased when we remind ourselves of the nature of the life for which these eighteen years were the God-chosen preparation. It was nothing short of this, the life which regenerates, redeems the world. No lesser thought will suffice. Not merely the Saviour of individual souls—though that includes more than we commonly think or mean—but the second Adam, the New Man, the world's Master. Such was Jesus Christ; and this which St. Luke here records was the earthly and human side of His preparation for that work. What you and I are to-day, what the Church is to-day, what the world is to-day,—is the outcome of those eighteen silent years. There is as much need of Nazareth and the carpenter's shop as of Calvary in the working out of the counsels of God. No link in the chain of our redemption may be broken, even though it be those quiet days in the village home of which this is all the record: "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and in favour with God and man." Learn to bow down before the mystery of God's revelation, the wonder of His working. Learn a proof of the Divine origin of this Gospel record in its very unlikeness to our human methods. "Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out."

Study then this short, sweet record of the human life of Jesus Christ. The danger is lest gazing at that perfect life—

lying mirrored in these quiet depths of the evangelist—we forget that admiration is not imitation, and wonder is not worship. One only attitude befits us—reverent, thankful, humble worship; and worship means obedience as well as praise. “Christ for me Saviour, example, Lord”; “I for Christ scholar, follower, servant”—that ought to be our note. Do not stand aside, apart; join in the great battle between Christ and Satan, good and evil. Never mind if you cannot understand all the complicated issues of the fight. No private soldier expects to see all. It is enough for him to do his duty in the ranks; the general knows all. Put the question, “What of the field’s fortune?” to any who have done their part in the great, age-long warfare, and note their ready reply,—

“What of the field’s fortune? That concerned our leader.

Led, we struck our stroke, nor cared for doings left or right.

Each as on his sole head—failer or succeder—

Lay the blame or lit the praise: no care for cowards—fight!”

R. BROWNING, “Ferishtah’s Fancies.”

In this glorious life of the Lord, then, let us trace some lessons which may enable us the better to “fight the good fight.”

See three things—submission, work, growth.

*Submission.* He was “subject,” obedient “unto them,” ver. 51.

The characteristic virtue of childhood, its natural and necessary condition.

The Apocryphal Gospels are full of marvels said to have been done by the Child Jesus at work or at play. Of such things Holy Scripture knows nothing. They would have been out of keeping with the laws of childhood, and “it became Him.” Who took our nature upon Him “to fulfil all righteousness.” The daily round of home life, with its routine of duties, its continual calls for submission, often all the more difficult to obey because we cannot, even to ourselves, dignify



them with the name of hardships or great trials—this Christ has consecrated by these eighteen silent years. Every life has its time or times of Nazareth; its calls for daily, hourly submission to the wills, the “ways” of others. The happiness or misery of life depends largely on the use of such opportunities. Since family life is an essential part of human probation, the Lord has left us herein an example that we should follow His steps. No longing to be free from irksome restraint; no despising home duties because they are commonplace; but *submission*. It may be to Nazareth in its measure, as well as to the Passion itself, that we may apply the words which tell us “He learned *obedience* by the things which He suffered.”

*Work.* A word here only. We know, though not from these verses, that the Lord shared the daily toil of the carpenter. We learn God’s blessing on work, the misery and loss of idleness. Doing each day’s work in its appointed time—be the work what it may—fitted Him for the future when the work was different. Surely, the lesson is not *what* do you do, but *how* do you do it?

*Growth.* Here we tread on more difficult ground. Two things seem clear amid the darkness. (a) We must remember when we speak of *growth* that it does not necessarily imply *imperfection*. The child is not to blame because he is not a man all at once. It is the law of his being to grow. He lives by growth. Up to his measure he may be perfectly developed; but that measure, that capacity is continually expanding. So we learn to think of growth as inseparable from healthy human life, of progress as the law of our nature, of increase in wisdom as perfectly compatible with all moral and spiritual excellence. And since all true growth, according to His own Divine law, must always be pleasing to God, it is but natural to read of the increase of Divine favour that accompanied the increase in wisdom as in bodily stature. It is ever a beautiful sight to watch the flower-like expansion of a child’s nature,

body and soul blending together in harmonious progress. And what we love to trace, even when mingled with faults and deformed by mistakes, must surely have been more lovely still in the eyes of God and man in the case of the Holy Child. For once this earth has been permitted to witness the natural development of a sinless childhood—development not by sudden miracle, but by Divine indwelling. The glory that dwelt in Jesus shone forth in those eighteen quiet years in the orderly progress, step by step, of the boy to the youth, the youth to the man. For (*b*) nothing can be more plain than this, that the Lord's humanity was real indeed. Every line of the Gospels tells us this; every word of these verses, which record while they do not reveal these eighteen years.

We do not doubt it indeed; perhaps we dwell on it with appreciation and thankfulness. But never let us forget that the same Lord, Who thus lived and toiled, rose, ascended, lives, reigns. It is not simply by contemplation, even devout contemplation, of the perfectly human Jesus that our spirits live. It is by personal fellowship with the God-man—as human now as ever, but God then in the days of His flesh, as now. This is the message of redemption, God's message to the Church and to the world, to the soul that suffers, sins, dies, to the world that sickens, staggers, swoons. "God made man for you."

Lastly, all these eighteen years were years of *preparation*. Thirty years of obscurity, and only two, or at the most three, of active work. "What extraordinary want of proportion! what failure of moral perspective!" we should have said. But *God's lessons are only to be slowly learned*. Mark this point. See, then, how Christ used the discipline of this preparation! See Him when He came forth from the thirty years of silence and toil! See Him as He moved among men—calm, unruffled, unresting indeed, but unhurried! Did He not know the depth of human needs? "Lord, to Whom shall we go but to Thee for words to express man's utter

emptiness? Who has gauged sin like Thee? Who sees sin as the man does who views it in Thy light?"

Did Christ then not feel how short the time is? Well He knew that "the night cometh when no man can work." Yet, knowing man's need and life's shortness, He moves among men "like a wise physician in a sick-room, the only one not flurried, not distracted, because the only one who adequately knows at once the greatness of the crisis, and the right remedies to use."

"Whence then hath this man this wisdom and these marvellous gifts? How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" Surely the answer on the human side is this: Because he has used rightly the opportunities of preparation, the times of waiting, all that we mean by the discipline of life. Remember, then, that God's lessons are only to be *slowly* learned. "First the blade, then the ear, after that"—not before—"the full corn in the ear."

What is the use of all this drudgery, all this taking pains, all this monotonous attention to little wearisome details of duty. "I want to strike out boldly for the shore. I am tired of buffeting with these tiresome little waves." It is the child's voice that speaks thus, not the full-grown man's. Experience teaches that painful, laborious learning must go before successful activity. Day by day you go on drudging, slipping, failing, hoping, blundering: at last the moment comes when you find out that you have mastered your lesson, and you sweep along the icy path with confidence and power. So in all things. God's lessons are to be mastered only by the man. First you receive some spiritual truth—say, for example, the fact of personal sinfulness—as an outside thing altogether; then by degrees it becomes more real and living, you begin to see that it has a meaning for you as a thing to be strived after, until at last, you hardly know how, it becomes a part of your very self, nothing in the world for you more real than this, your sinful soul in God's presence. Fully to attain

to such knowledge you must do as Jesus did, go apart by yourself along the Divinely-chosen road of difficult duty—"content to fill a little space, if God be glorified"—ready to learn, ready to obey, because, above all, more ready to pray. All this can only be deliberately, consciously chosen, as an act of the whole man, when you have mastered the spiritual alphabet, the sinful soul drawn and drawing toward the Divine Saviour. It is blessed, though it is very hard, and we learn but slowly to be taught by Him. So, so only, we find "rest unto our souls." No higher wish can be framed, no better prayer offered than this, that all may be made able to learn those lessons of daily life which Christ Himself has practised before He taught.

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#### A PASTOR'S FAREWELL.

BY THE REV. E. H. BICKERSTETH, BISHOP-DESIGNATE OF EXETER.\*

"Only let your conversation be as it becometh the Gospel of Christ, that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the Gospel."—PHIL. i. 27.

THIS was the entreaty of a pastor and a father in Christ, to whom life and death were only the portals of a blessedness to come. He had just affirmed: "To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain," and again: "What to choose I wot not. To depart and to be with Christ is far better; nevertheless, to abide in the flesh is more needful to you," and yet he had an inwrought persuasion that God would spare him for a season, and bring him to them again. All was well with him and for him, and this calm serenity left his heart at leisure from itself, desiring the best and holiest gifts for them. How humbling, and yet how animating, brethren, is his example! Humbling,

\* Farewell sermon preached in Christ Church, Hampstead Heath, on Sunday morning, March 15th, 1885.

indeed ; for how far short we have fallen hitherto. And yet how animating ; for there is all grace in store for us for the time to come, if we will but open our hearts to receive it.

However, it is in this tranquil confidence that St. Paul writes : " Only let your conversation be as it becometh the Gospel of Christ, that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the Gospel."

" Only." As if he had said : " Whatever betides me, that is of very secondary importance." " Whether I come and see you." He loved them with all a pastor's and apostle's love. There were many of them his children in the faith ; they were all of them inexpressibly dear to him in the Lord. Think what his coming and seeing them would have been ! What mutual prayers and praises, what memories of the past, what anticipations of the future ! St. Paul standing again among the Christians at Philippi is a picture which fills our hearts. " Or else be absent,"—either still kept a prisoner at Rome in bonds, chained, day and night, to the soldier who kept him,—and think what this was to an ardent spirit like Paul's, thirsting for active evangelistic work ; or the word *absent* may well cover the meaning spoken of in the 17th verse of the next chapter : " Though I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith." *Absent*, therefore, may include absence from the body, presence with the Lord—the being with Christ in Paradise. Whatever might be before himself, the joy of their reunion in the flesh, or his long captivity, ending, it might be, in martyrdom for Christ's sake and theirs, he sinks every consideration in the one absorbing desire for them—for, in truth, his life was wrapt up in their life—" Let your conversation be as it becometh the Gospel of Christ."

I need not remind you that the old English word *conversation* signifies not merely the words of the lips, but the whole conduct of life—all that a man is in word and in deed, as when

he says to the Corinthians : "This is our confidence that we have had our conversation in the world in simplicity and godly sincerity." But the word here translated *conversation* is pregnant with more meaning still. It is tamely rendered in the Revised Version, "Your manner of life." Perhaps the compound expression in chap. iii. 20, "Our citizen life is in heaven," would alone reproduce it for us in English. It implies all the honourable intercourse of citizen with citizen, bound together by the mutual claims of one common weal ; and thus the word implies citizenship. It embraces the communion of saints on earth—yea, more than this, seeing that we are strangers and pilgrims here, and that our citizen life is in heaven. It reminds us that our fatherland is not on earth, and that we are seeking a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. It is of such a life that the Apostle says : "Let your conversation be as it becometh the Gospel of Christ"—that is, the Gospel which proclaimed Christ ; the Gospel which set forth the incarnate and anointed Son of God in all His grace and all His glory ; the Gospel in which the Christ, the personal and present Saviour, was all in all ; the Gospel which is God's gift to a fallen world, and which the Saviour charges His Church to preach to every country under heaven.

Consider for a moment what the Gospel had done for these Philippians, and what it claimed from them. It had found them without Christ, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, strangers from the covenant of promise, without hope, without God in the world. It had come to them, a message of life, the glad tidings of salvation, revealing the very heart of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and they had received it, and it had cancelled all the debt of sin, and set them free from its insufferable burden. It had broken the bonds of the power of darkness. It had delivered them from the thralldom of this present evil world. It had made them partakers of the Holy Ghost. It had given them a free access to the throne



of God. It had enrolled them in the Church of the living God, and made them members of the body of Christ. It had revealed to them the ministry of those sent forth to minister to the heirs of salvation. It had opened to them the gates of heaven, and the day-spring of the resurrection morning, and the eternal ages of glory beyond. As expressed in the joyous anticipation of faith by the Apostle: "Ye are come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God, to an innumerable company of angels, to the Church of the first-born written in heaven."

And this is but the barest outline of that which it had done for them; and, these being simple facts, how naturally and reasonably it claimed that they should walk answerably to their Christian calling, as the sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty, as the spouse of Christ, which He had purchased with His own blood, as those whose bodies were the temples of the Holy Ghost, as those who were to live and reign with Christ for ever in sinless and endless felicity.

"To walk as becometh the Gospel of Christ." What did it not imply! We are lost in the silence of thought, as St. Peter was lost when he said: "Seeing ye look for such things, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?" Perhaps the Collect, in which we so often join, expresses the longing of our hearts nearest: "O God, who hast prepared for them that love Thee such good things as pass men's understanding, pour into our hearts such love toward Thee, that we, loving Thee above all things, may obtain Thy promises, which exceed all that we can desire."

But, brethren, St. Paul does not leave us in this undefined longing, however blessed it may be in this pressing on towards perfection, however stimulating the thought; but, as is his wont, he emphasizes the desire of his soul by naming that practical godliness which he longed that they should attain; for he says: "That whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one

spirit." I would remind you in passing that if, as we have seen reason to believe, the word *absent* at least includes absence from the body, we have here another glimpse within the veil assuring us that the souls under the heavenly altar who cry, "How long, O Lord? How long?" are not uninformed of that which takes place on earth. "That ye stand fast," not like children tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, rooted and built up in Christ, stablished in the faith, as they had been taught, in one spirit, one mind, or rather, with one soul, the human spirit quickened by the Spirit of God, and thus informing and kindling all the affections of the human soul, so close and intimate a union linking together the saints at Philippi that he speaks of their having but one spirit, one soul, without jar or divisions, for divisions always weaken. "Divide and conquer" has ever been the policy of Christ's enemy and ours. Instead of this let them in one spirit, with one soul, strive together, like an athlete, every nerve and sinew bent upon the arduous struggle, strive together for the faith of the Gospel, that faith once for all delivered to the saints, to hold it unadulterated, undiluted, undefiled, entire, to walk riper and stronger in it day by day, to make it known to every man and woman and child at home and in the regions beyond, love of Christ who died for them constraining them, the power of the Holy Ghost resting on them, the glory of God their object, and the smile of God their reward. Nothing less than this was the heart's desire and prayer of St. Paul for the Philippians. I hope it is not presumptuous for you and me to say that, at however great a distance, we follow in his footsteps, and in theirs. Still, nothing lower should content us; indeed, with the Master's words ringing in our ears, and echoing in our hearts: "Be ye, therefore, perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect"; "I have given you an example that ye should do as I have done"; "A new commandment give I unto you, As I have loved you, so ye love one another"; and with His eye fixed upon every one of

us as on St. Peter of old, and saying to each one individually and personally, "Follow thou Me," it is simply, brethren, impossible to put any limit to the standard of grace and love which He commands us to strive after. The Gospel of Christ can claim nothing but perfection. I know that while we are in the flesh, and compassed with infirmities, we shall not get beyond the words of the beloved Apostle, who drank most deeply into the Spirit of his Lord, and yet he said, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us." But I know also, "According to your faith be it unto you," and as you grow in faith, you will be more and more conquerors through Him that loved you, and your citizen life will be progressively worthier of the Gospel of Christ.

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## V. *Goldwin Smith's Last Word to Dean Mansel.*

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[The following is taken from a Canadian paper, *The Week*, published in Toronto, to which Mr. Goldwin Smith regularly contributes, along with others less literate. It will interest those of our readers who remember the old Oxford collisions.—ED. C. P.]

IN the *Quarterly Review* there is a biographical sketch, indited by a loving and perhaps slightly fabling pen, of Dean Mansel, the author of the famous Bampton Lectures on "The Limits of Religious Thought." Dean Mansel was a most acute logician, and profoundly learned in metaphysics, but his culture was almost limited to that sphere; it included little of history or

general humanity. When he was made Professor of Ecclesiastical History, the subject which he chose for his lectures was Agnosticism, in which the metaphysician was at home. He was, or affected to be, the most bigoted of Tories, acted as the Tory wirepuller and chairman of committees in the Oxford elections, and made himself the special organ of Tory antipathy to Mr. Gladstone. The "stupid party" adored him as its god. At the same time he was the hero of a college common room,—more remarkable in those days for conviviality than for refinement,—and its established jester, in which capacity he brought forth from his treasury things unclerical as well as clerical. By Bishop Wilberforce he was described as "wanting in religiosity," though he was in orthodoxy supreme. Such in his gifts, equipments, and environments, was the author of that curious system of religious philosophy on which its adversary, Frederick Maurice, indelibly stamped the name of Orthodox Atheism. In the armoury of metaphysics Mansel imagined himself to have found the sword which would kill Rationalism, and perhaps give a blow indirectly to general Liberalism at the same time. He identified God with the Absolute and Unconditional; and, as the human mind was incapable of apprehending the Absolute and the Unconditional, it followed that man's reason and moral sense could tell him nothing about God. The only religion possible, therefore, was the unreasoning acceptance of revelation as contained in the Bible, and as expounded by the orthodox interpreters. The moral difficulties connected with certain passages in the Old Testament were summarily disposed of on the principle that, as the absolute morality of God differed in kind from human morality, an act which was criminal according to one might be righteous according to the other. The historical method, which traces progress in morality, and vindicates the early steps of that progress as part of the education of the race, had never presented itself to Dean Mansel's mind. Such was the gist of the lectures the author of which was hailed by delighted

orthodoxy as a second Butler, though no parallel could be less happy, since Butler's philosophy as well as his soul was full of that "religiosity" which Dean Mansel wanted. Before the lecturer had concluded his series he seems to have felt misgivings as to the ultimate tendency of his reasoning, for he betrays a disposition to hedge. Misgivings he might well have. It is evident that if our reason and moral sense can tell us nothing about God, we have no means of knowing even that God exists, much less have we the means of deciding that an alleged revelation comes from Him. The moral evidences of revelation at once fall to the ground if human morality differs in kind from the Divine. But the evidence of miracles falls also, since there is nothing to assure us that power, any more than justice or benevolence, is an attribute of God. With Natural Religion Revealed Religion must perish, and Agnosticism must triumph over their common grave. It was, in fact, not long before Dean Mansel had the pleasure of seeing his argument complacently endorsed and incorporated by a great Agnostic philosopher, who found fault with it only as being somewhat too destructive, since it annihilated not only belief in God, but reverence for the Unknown. The atheistic and immoral consequences of his theory were afterwards brought home to him by Mill, with a force of superior morality to which he hopelessly succumbed. The net result was simply a demonstration of the weakness of metaphysics. Suppose we are incapable of apprehending the Absolute or the Unconditional; suppose we are incapable of understanding any part of the vocabulary of modern scholasticism to which these terms belong; this does not hinder the moral and intellectual nature of man from pointing true to that of its Maker. The treatment which great and truly religious writers received from this logical sledge-hammer of orthodoxy diminished the general sorrow at his catastrophe. But there is no doubt that he was an excellent man and Tory, as well as a writer, in his way, of great acuteness and power, though

as a theologian he was led, by excess of logic and defect of religiosity, while he sought the life of ritualism inadvertently, to slay religion.

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## VI. *Mark Pattison.*

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[The following paper, which we reprint from the *Guardian*, August 6th, 1884, is of surpassing interest at present. It is undoubtedly from the pen of Dean Church, almost the only man referred to with admiration in the strange "Memoirs" of Pattison recently published; and for wisdom, justice, and kindness, cannot be surpassed. But the last word about Pattison cannot yet be said in print.—  
ED. C. P.]

THE Rector of Lincoln, who died at Harrogate this day week, was a man about whom judgments are more than usually likely to be biassed by prepossessions more or less unconscious and only intelligible to the mind of the judge. There are those who are in danger of dealing with him too severely. There are also those whose temptation will be to magnify and possibly exaggerate his gifts and acquirements,—great as they undoubtedly were,—the use that he made of them, and the place which he filled among his contemporaries. One set of people finds it not easy to forget that he had been at one time closer than most young men of his generation to the great religious leaders whom they are accustomed to revere; that he was of a nature fully to understand and appreciate both their intellectual greatness and their moral and spiritual height; that he had shared to the full their ideas and hopes; that they, too, had measured his depth of character and grasp and breadth and subtlety of mind; and that the keenest judge among them



of men and of intellect had picked him out as one of the most original and powerful of a number of very able contemporaries. Those who remember this cannot easily pardon the lengths of dislike and bitterness to which in after life Pattison allowed himself to be carried against the cause which once had his hearty allegiance, and in which, if he had discovered, as he thought, its mistakes and its weakness, he had once recognized with all his soul the nobler side. And, on the other hand, the partisans of the opposite movement, into whose interests he so disastrously, as it seems to us, and so unreservedly threw himself, naturally welcomed and made the most of such an accession to their strength, and such an unquestionable addition to their literary fame. To have detached such a man from the convictions which he had so professedly and so earnestly embraced, to have enlisted him as their determined and implacable antagonist, to be able to point to him in the maturity and strength of his powers as one who, having known its best aspects, had deliberately despaired of religion, and had turned against its representatives the scorn and hatred of a passionate nature whose fires burned all the more fiercely under its cold crust of reserve and sarcasm—this was a triumph of no common order, and it might conceivably blind those who could rejoice in it to the comparative value of qualities which, at any rate, were very rare and remarkable ones.

Pattison was a man who in many ways did not do himself justice. As a young man, his was a severe and unhopeful mind, and the tendency to despond was increased by circumstances. There was something in the quality of his unquestionable ability which kept him for long out of the ordinary prizes of an Oxford career ; in the class-list, in the higher competitions for Fellowships, he was not successful. There are those who long remembered the earnest pleading of the Latin letters which it was the custom to send in when a man stood for a Fellowship, and in which Pattison set forth his ardent

longing for knowledge, and his narrow and unprosperous condition as a poor student. He always came very near ; indeed, he more than once won the vote of the best judges ; but he just missed the prize. To the bitter public disappointments of 1845 were added the vexations caused by private injustice and illtreatment. He turned fiercely on those who, as he thought, had wronged him, and he began to distrust men, and to be on the watch for proofs of hollowness and selfishness in the world and in the Church. Yet at this time, when people were hearing of his bitter and unsparing sayings in Oxford, he was from time to time preaching in village churches, and preaching sermons which both his educated and his simple hearers thought unlike those of ordinary men in their force, reality, and earnestness. But with age and conflict the disposition to harsh and merciless judgments strengthened and became characteristic. This, however, should be remembered : where he revered, he revered with genuine and unstinted reverence ; where he saw goodness in which he believed he gave it ungrudging honour. He had real pleasure in recognising height and purity of character and true intellectual force, and he maintained his admiration when the course of things had placed wide intervals between him and those to whom it had been given. His early friendships, where they could be retained, he did retain warmly and generously even to the last ; he seemed almost to draw a line between them and other things in the world. The truth, indeed, was that beneath that icy and often cruel irony there was at bottom a most warm and affectionate nature, yearning for sympathy, longing for high and worthy objects, which, from the misfortunes especially of his early days, never found room to expand and unfold itself. Let him feel and see that anything was real, —character, purpose, cause,—and, at any rate, it was sure of his respect, probably of his interest. But the doubt whether it was real was always ready to present itself to his critical and suspicious mind ; and these doubts grew with his years.

People have often not given Pattison credit for the love

that was in him for what was good and true ; it is not to be wondered at, but the observation has to be made. On the other hand, a panegyric like that which we reprint from the *Times* sets too high an estimate on his intellectual qualities and on the position which they gave him. He was full of the passion for knowledge ; he was very learned, very acute in his judgment on what his learning brought before him, very versatile, very shrewd, very subtle ; too full of the truth of his subject to care about seeming to be original ; but, especially in his poetical criticisms, often full of that best kind of originality which consists in seeing and pointing out novelty in what is most familiar and trite. But, not merely as a practical but as a speculative writer, he was apt to be too much under the empire and pressure of the one idea which at the moment occupied and interested his mind. He could not resist it ; it came to him with exclusive and over-mastering force ; he did not care to attend to what limited it or conflicted with it. And thus, with all the force and sagacity of his University theories, they were not always self-consistent, and they were often one-sided and exaggerated. He was not a leader whom any one could follow, however much they might rejoice at the blows which he might happen to deal, sometimes unexpectedly, at things which they disliked. And this holds of more serious things than even University reform and reconstruction. And next, though every competent reader must do justice to Pattison's distinction as a man of letters, as a writer of English prose, and as a critic of what is noble and excellent and what is base and poor in literature, there is a curious want of completeness, a frequent crudity and hardness, a want, which is sometimes a surprising want, of good sense and good taste, which form unwelcome blemishes in his work, and just put it down below the line of first-rate excellence which it ought to occupy. Morally, in that love of reality and of all that is high and noble in character which certainly marked him, he was much better than many suppose, who

know only the strength of his animosities and the bitterness of his sarcasm. Intellectually, in reach, and fulness, and solidity of mental power, it may be doubted whether he was so great as it has recently been the fashion to rate him.

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## VII. *Brief Outlines and Suggestive Themes.*

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### I. SATAN BRUISED.

“The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.”—ROM. xvi. 20.

I. 1st. A reference to Gen. iii. 15, Apostle points to certainty of Christ’s victory as guarantee of ours.

2nd. An echo of promise in Psalm xci., of victory over all antagonists:—pestilence, terror, flying arrow, destruction. “Thou shalt tread on the lion”; on “the adder.” Power to **conquer sins known and hidden.**

3rd. An echo of Luke x. 19. All these are gathered into the promise of the text. Christ’s heel being on the head, we have only to keep down a little fragment of the writhing body, a little bit of vertebræ. If we try in His strength we shall come off more than conquerors.

II. What strenuous effort is needed to keep down a snake’s head, a desperate life-and-death struggle! Incongruous epithet at first sight, “the God of *peace*.” Why not “God of *strength*?” Our victory only possible by possessing the peace of God. The reason we fall so easily is because we lack that sense of rest in God. That peace of God, and the God who gives that peace, will help us to overcome.

III. “The peace of God” (see Phil. iv. 7) will keep us as a garrison keeps a fortress. The Christian’s armour, the gospel of peace (Ephes. vi. 15).

IV. Ask God for His peace; then, in the fiercest struggle, we

shall have quiet hearts, peace amid endless agitation ; repose in tempest ; quiet spirit in the battle.

V. All will come by communion with Christ ; His conquest our inspiration. "Shortly ?" Yes ! by simple obedience and loving fellowship swift victory comes. If not, not His fault, but ours. On Eternity's dial, seventy years but a moment. The longest life—struggle but a little while ; then the "far-exceeding weight of glory." Thy Master conquered ; keep near Him, scorning short-lived temptations, calm in such brief struggles then "under our feet for ever the enemies of our souls."

*Alexander Maclaren, D.D.*

(Union Chapel, Manchester, January 28th, 1885.)

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## II. NEVER FORSAKEN.

"He hath said : I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, the Lord is my Helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."—HEB. xiii. 5, 6.

NO need to name the Speaker—that majestic "He." Two speakers and their two sayings :—

1. God's speech, from heaven to earth. "I will never leave thee," etc. Words nowhere in old Testament occur literally, but very near.

1st. Jacob at Bethel (Gen. xxviii. 15). The lonely pilgrim, with dim dark future before him ; we all face it sometimes. God speaks ; the ladder descends, and bright in the blue star-depths the angels ; "surely God is in this place." One man, with that companion, always in the majority.

2nd. Moses' dying words to Joshua (Deut. xxxi. 7-8). God ratifies it to Joshua afterwards (Josh. i. 5). The promise to a warrior on the eve of sore struggle. "Count the cost, reckon the enemy's strength, but count not your resources and forget Me." Brennus' sword in the Capitol, Christ's sword flung in for us.

3rd. David's dying words to Solomon (1 Chron. xxviii. 20). Blessed are the parents who can so pass the covenant promise to their children. Pilgrim, Warrior, Builder, these sum up all our needs, and all the promises. Its highest beauty in Christ's word (Matt. xxviii. 20).

II. Man's answer from earth to heaven. "The Lord is my Helper, I will not fear." (See Psalm cxviii.) But the revised version says, "So that we *do*" (not *may*) "boldly say." We say we believe the promises; do we answer with *perfect* confidence? "That promise I take for *mine*" (Gal. ii. 20). "He is my Helper, so I shall not fear." No use to say to a man, Do not be afraid. World too strong for any man in it; life and death have tremendous powers to make cowards of the bravest. We would not be wise if we were not, except on one condition: "*Believe, and fear not.*" You can resolve, "I will trust"; then surely comes the triumph, and the shelter of the Divine companionship.

*Alexander Maclaren, D.D.*

(Union Chapel, Manchester, March 4th, 1885.)

### III.—WALKING IN LIGHT.

"Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of Thy countenance.—PSALM lxxxix. 15.

THE Psalmist has been dwelling in magnificent language upon some of the attributes of God. The pillars of His throne are justice and judgment; "mercy and truth go before His face." He cannot say anything about that surpassing brightness that fell on the two heralds. The sunshine can only be spoken of as "the people's blessedness" that hear the "joyful sound," the sound of the great name; "they shall walk in the light."

I. "Walking," a simple metaphor of practical life. Our knowledge of our Father's character should make common life radiant. We should have continual consciousness of that sunny presence in all occupations. God has done His part, we must do ours, and determine whether that knowledge shall lead us into habitual, happy fellowship with Him. Life with God, for God, in God, is "walking in the light of His face." We may choose the sunny or the shady side of the road. Does that name steal into our hearts like sweet, beguiling melody? Hard it is, but possible, to "set the Lord always before us." They who walk in the light are surely blessed.

II. Such a walk is a walk in gladness. Light is the emblem



of joy. Two landscapes:—Winter, black fortress, grey rocks, dreary moor, dismal black tarns among the heather. Summer changes it into a dream of beauty. Our lives may be either ; in the dark, cloudy days the light will break through many a chink in the cloud ; men may not see it, but the eye, purged by faith, can behold it. Tropical sky not half as beautiful as ours. Nobody knows what brightness is until they have seen the gilded thunder-cloud ; nobody knows God's presence until in the hour of darkness.

III. "Walking in the light" is guidance. No promise of infallible illumination, but those near God catch the wisdom that removes all clouds from our vision. If we dwelt nearer Him we should less often be in perplexity. "I am the light of the world ; he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness."

IV. Light purifies—we should learn our faults. (See Psalm xc. 8.) That flashing brightness may be a terror or a joy. (Psalm cxxxix. 23.) An advantage, that every sin He sees shall be manifested also to us. Secret faults do most harm. A little defect may be the leak through which all our gladness ebbs away. Be thankful if you find it ; refer all actions and habits to Him, and the light will reveal the evil. Nothing foul can live in that presence.

V. Light bleaches ; "walk in the light," and the blood will "cleanse from all sin."

*Alexander Maclaren, D.D.*

(Union Chapel, Manchester, February 4th, 1885.)

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## VIII. *Biblical Illustrations and Anecdotes.*



### IX. KEPT BY GOD.

“And behold I am with thee, and will keep thee.”—GEN. xxviii. 15.

“I HAVE known,” says the late Dr. Guthrie, “a timid traveller whose route lay across the higher Alps, along a path no broader than a mule’s foothold, that skirted a dreadful precipice, whence could be discerned the river far down below diminished to a silver thread; and on that dizzy precipice I have known a timid traveller, who fancied it safest to shut her eyes, and not attempt to guide the course nor touch the bridle—a fatal touch, perhaps, that might throw steed and rider over, till bounding from shelf to shelf they lay a mangled mass in the valley below. And there are times and circumstances in the believer’s life, when, if he would keep himself from sinful doubts, if he would keep himself from falling into despair, he must, as it were, shut his eyes, lay the bridle on the neck of Providence, commit his way to God, and, however things may look, make this his comfort, “He will never leave me nor forsake me.”



### X. THE LOST SUN.

“And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.”—ISA. xl. 5.

THERE is a legend of a lost sun. There was a people who were born in the kingdom of night; the heavens were black above them, studded with stars, but they never saw the sun. Fitful auroras shed a waving lustre over the heavens, but the oldest inhabitants had never beheld the sun. In the Saga there was a floating legend that there had been a sun, but he was lost, and it was said he shone on other lands. Travellers went across the

icebergs to try and find the land where the sun shone ; but they could not find it. They wandered to and fro, crying, " When will the sun return ? Lost light ! Lost sun ! " At length they saw the round red sun rising behind the iceberg heights. At that great sight forth came all the dwellers from their caves, and climbed the slippery icebergs to hail the sun. He poured his beams from glacier to glacier ; the snow began to melt, and the flowers to appear, and birds to travel over the kind sky. Great was the joy as the people cried, " The sun ! He is come back again ! "

Thus to the Christian there is a faith that, however dark the world, the time will come when the lost sun will be seen.

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#### XI.—HONOUR OF PARENTS.

" Honour thy father and thy mother."—EXOD. ii. 12.

TENDERNESS and sympathy were conspicuously displayed in the character of the late Dr. Alexander Waugh, London. A young man of unimpeachable character was desirous of entering upon missionary labour, and was recommended to the notice of the London Missionary Society. He had passed through the usual examination, but stated he had one difficulty—he had an aged mother dependent upon an elder brother and himself for maintenance ; in case of his brother's death, he wished to be at liberty to return home to support her. Scarcely had he made this natural request than he heard the voice of one of the directors exclaim, " If you love your mother more than the Lord Jesus, you won't do for us." The young man was abashed and confounded, and he was asked to retire while his case was considered. Upon his return, Dr. Waugh, who was in the chair, addressed him with patriarchal dignity, telling him that the committee did not feel themselves at liberty to accept his services on a condition involving uncertainty as to the term, but immediately added, " We think none the worse of you, my good lad, for your beautiful regard to your aged parent. You are following the example of Him whose Gospel you wish to proclaim among the heathen, and who, when He hung upon the cross in dying agonies, beholding His mother and His beloved disciple standing by, said to the one, " Behold thy son ! " and to John, " Behold thy mother ! "

## XII. CONTRITION.

“A broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise.”—  
PSALM li. 17.

A POOR Arab was travelling in the desert when he met with a stream of clear, sweet, sparkling water. Accustomed as he was to brackish wells, to his simple mind it appeared that such water as this was worthy of a monarch, and filling his leathern bottle he determined to present it to the Caliph. The poor man travelled a long distance before he reached the presence of the Caliph, and laid his offering at his feet. The Caliph did not despise the gift, but ordered some of the water to be poured into a cup, drank it, and thanking the Arab, ordered him to be rewarded. The courtiers pressed round eager to taste of the wonderful water; but to the surprise of all, the Caliph forbade them to touch even a drop. After the poor Arab had left with a joyful heart, the Caliph said to his courtiers: “During the travels of the poor man the water in this bottle has become impure and distateful, but it was an offering of love, and as such I received it. But I knew that had I suffered another to partake of it he would not have concealed his disgust, and, therefore, I forbade you to touch the water lest the donor’s heart should have been wounded.” All that sinners can present to their King is like this water. Imperfection mingles with our best service, but He will not reject the little offering of love and faith. Even a cup of cold water given in the name of a disciple shall in nowise lose its reward.

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# *I. Sermons.*

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## I. THE LAW OF FRUITFULNESS.

BY RIGHT REV. W. BOYD CARPENTER, D.D., LORD BISHOP  
OF RIPON.\*

“If it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.”—JOHN xii. 24.

THE position which I suppose most Christian people take up with regard to their practical duties is, that they are determined to hold their Master's words as embodying the best and highest expression of the true and eternal law of God.

I think it is not enough to contemplate the person and life of Jesus Christ from any of the mere temporal or subordinate points of view, but we ought to endeavour to raise our minds also to the recognition of those in which He unfolds to us those laws by which our lives are best regulated and turned to the best and highest account. And if we look at our Master merely as a teacher of men, standing in their midst and trying to make them apprehend what are the essential and eternal laws by which all their lives are governed, I think you will be struck by the intense honesty of His words to the men all around Him. He never allows them to dwell under any misapprehension.

\* Preached at the Cathedral, Manchester, Tuesday, February 10th, 1885.

And whilst He is infinitely wise and tender in choosing the most fitting moment to make clear to them what are the laws and principles of His own life, and what must be the laws and principles of theirs, He never allows their misapprehensions to lead them astray, or to lead them to look forward to that which would be utterly and entirely out of harmony with His purposes concerning them.

The people at this moment were full of expectation. They thought that perchance that temporal kingdom, the sovereignty of the world, the kingdom which they had so long looked for, was now about to be established, and a movement of excitement amongst them seemed to lead them to think that the moment of our Lord's temporal power was at hand, and were only awaiting a sign from Him. Therefore, our Lord lays down the principles upon which His kingdom shall come. They are wrong if they expect temporal blessing. The power of reaping the harvest comes only through toil and suffering; and to the men who had been musing, wondering, and expecting, Jesus Christ turns and asks them to listen to what were the eternal laws by which life eternal shall be attained. No power comes into the world but on the condition of suffering. The very food you eat is not the product of an easy-going Nature. You are wrong if you pretend to believe that Nature carries on her processes with splendid ease, and that man, and man only, suffers; and that the great physical and natural world around him moves on indifferent, heedless, unsuffering. Jesus tells them and us that this is a misconception and an error. Nothing, He says, springs into being, nothing moves into fulness of power, nothing attains the end of its life but by the law of suffering. The golden harvest upon the side of the hills swept by the fresh breeze, the flowers blooming in



the midst of the meadows, all the beauties of the earth are the product of Nature's throes of pain. It is only in death that life can be achieved ; it is only on condition of suffering that strength and power is found.

Now what I would ask you to remember is this : that when Jesus lays down that law, that the condition of success is suffering, and sacrifice, and pain, He only tells us what is an eternal law, a law by which all human life is bounded and conditioned. Sometimes we are inclined to make a distinction between what we call the laws of Christian life and the laws of ordinary life ;—a false distinction. The same great laws prevail wherever God dwells, and Christian laws are but the highest spiritual expression of the conditions which underlie and rule all Nature.

And in another way we are often inclined to make a distinction which is false and misleading. We say to ourselves : "Yes ! we may well believe that such a law as this, that power comes but through suffering, is a Sunday conception of life ; but when you come to its work-a-day conception, some distinction and exception must be made." Now nothing can be more fatal to a true Christian life than this. If God's laws are to work at all, they must be made for all time. We have no right to divorce one portion of our life and actions from another, and say that, from a romantic and sentimental point of view, we admit that suffering is the condition of power when dealing with spiritual conceptions ; but when we come to turn our attention and apply our instincts to ordinary life, we are going to live by a totally different law. God makes His laws to govern all our lives, and those laws are true ; and we have no right to limit their application. The principle is true all through life, and it is true, also, that the higher

you go in the scale of life, the more true do you find the law to be.

Our Lord first takes us to the lowest side of life, the life of physical nature, and says that there we shall find the law in operation. The seed when put into the ground must die ; it must break away the outer husk in which it has been enveloped so long, push out its roots, embosoming its virtues and pouring them into the soil, and receiving back from the soil virtue and nourishment in return. And just on condition of its being ready to merge its life in the life of the earth that surrounds it will it be successful in growing to the harvest.

And so it is with regard to every beautiful and joyous thing that exists. Not a little child's laughter makes your home ring with mirthful gladness, but it has found its life in the trembling agony which has gone before.

All life teaches us that all that is worth winning at all can only be won by the expenditure of suffering and by running the risk of incurring some large sacrifice. Look upon life from its commercial side, and see if the principle is not true. The harvest is reaped and gathered into barns, but you cannot lock all the grain in the barns nor bring it into the markets for sale. A portion of it must be scattered again upon the fields, and man is always under the necessity of risking again a portion of it in the furrows in order to provide for the security of harvest in future years.

It is the same with regard to the gains of trade. The very soul of trade lies in what we call confidence and the spirit of enterprise. The spirit of enterprise does not mean the hugging up of your savings and the secure hiding of your wealth, but it means the reinvesting of the money you have gained in the operations of business once

more. That is to say : a man wins power and wealth by his readiness and wisdom in fulfilling that law of sacrifice. This year's gains is the seed to be sown in expectation of the gains of next year.

It is true also in the world of intellect. Men look at one another, and say : "Gifts ! Talents ! Genius !" We are inclined to say that these are the things that make men differ one from another ; but the longer we think of the meaning of these phrases the more conviction do we feel that the power of genius and talent largely consists in the power of self-denial and industry. The man who is able to do the greatest amount of labour, who is ready to endure, and strive strenuously, is the real genius after all. "Genius is patience," said the brilliant Frenchman, when he would express the thought that without hard work and patient endurance no man will ever attain the influence which genius ought to command in the world. It is only when a man puts his whole will into the subject which he is studying, denying himself the pleasures, even the innocent attractions of life, working whilst others are playing, pursuing his object and carrying out his investigations in the midst of hostile circumstances, enduring physical pain and hardship, patiently proving the certainties of his discoveries, that he stands at last amongst his fellows as a man who has something to teach, and as a master able to impart his truth to others, and thereby showing what genius by industry can achieve.

So in the world of intellect, of knowledge, of wealth, of nature ; all these are not things that are put into the hands of man like a harvest all ready reaped. All true blessings are first given to man in the form of the seed. He is bidden to take this seed of power, and undergo the terrible experience of pain, and disappointment, and

suffering, in working out the force of his genius until he has won the harvest of success. This is what is meant by Jesus' declaration that virtue must work out its own salvation in a man. He has the latent powers within, but he can only expect to attain to his highest life by letting them find expression in trial, and strife, and suffering by passing through the valley of humiliation. You must remove the barriers which hinder expression; the husk is round about you as the husk is round about the seed; you must learn in suffering if you would teach in song.

So it is true in the world of all noble and high enterprise. Men have desired to benefit their fellow-men, and win their admiration, and they have done it. But when you ask how they have done it, and watch their efforts to gain their object, you always find that underneath the story there is the record of constant industry and painful experience of agony. Fulton has his invention, but he must run the gauntlet of scorn and derision, and the unbelief of his fellow-men, before he wins his triumph. Columbus has his dream of a far-distant continent, which shall bring to men a new world to conquer, but he must first incur the ridicule and contemptuous scorn or indifference of those philosophers who plume themselves on being the wise men of the day. But he goes manfully and perseveringly to work, and at last proves for ever the truth he had taught.

The man who would run the gauntlet of scorn as the discredited discoverer of new countries and continents, until he has convinced a sceptical world of his discoveries, or as a man of intellect win a place of fame in the world, or as a man of business win capital from the world, he can do these things only on condition of passing through unknown and untried agony.

Is it not also true with regard to social life? You and I may say, "Well, that only applies to what we call the success of individuals." But what we want to realise is this—and we are as yet only beginning to understand it—what is called the solidarity of nations. Here we must remember that the same law obtains with regard to societies as obtains with regard to individuals. If you go back to the story of Israel, and study that people's earlier history, you will find that the same laws have had their illustration amongst the Jews. Their position at first was that of a mere assemblage of tribes who had not yet found out the secret of national cohesion. They were merely a scattered assemblage of isolated families, as it were; each with their individual preferences, needs, and interests, surrounded by the determined hostility of the nations of Canaan; hostility which only existed that they might from its experiences learn the secret of consolidation through suffering. And those whose minds and spirits were stirred by the illumination of wisdom from on high, that they might see the coming events, by the inspiration of God and the wisdom that springs from sorrow and suffering, saw clearly that the very life and safety of the nation lay in this—that each man should be ready to stand forth in defence of all. The duty of tribal suffering was the condition of the nation's unity.

Read the song of Deborah and Barak. Why did their lips burst forth in such fierce denunciation of the house of Merog, whilst they were full of blessing for the people and the tribes that had jeopardised their lives unto death in the "high places of the field"? It was solely in order to teach the people that their national position could only be established by the expenditure of tribal suffering.

That was in the dawn of its youth. And Solomon,

when he saw the nation in the meridian of its days, after the military power of David had enlarged and consolidated their political influence, still taught that the same principle was at work ; for, looking out upon them and their condition, he said that one of the greatest temptations of life is for each man to selfishly consider himself ; but “there is that scattereth and yet increaseth ; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.” The real wealth of the nation, says Solomon,—which consists in their consciousness of relationship as one great people, chosen of God,—depends on their readiness to sacrifice themselves ; but when every man is hugging for himself the accumulation of his life’s savings, and is not making his life a life spent in the people’s interests, the downfall of the nation is at hand.

Thus Solomon recognised the truth of the eternal law, that power comes only on condition of suffering ; and in the twilight of their prosperity the prophets looked out from their homes, and knowing what was surely coming upon the world, and reading on the curtain of the future the story of their overthrow and captivity and desolation, they saw that the causes lay in the indifference of the people of the land ; and they broke out in the strongest warnings and expostulation against those who were living at ease in Zion ; who had no heart nor sympathy, who would not suffer affliction with the people, that “put far away the evil day, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall ; that chant to the sound of the viol, and invent instruments of music, like David ; that drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments ; but are not grieved for the afflictions of Joseph.” The spirit of selfishness had come into the



land ; and the power which would alone consolidate the nation, the power of individual suffering for the good of the race, that principle had been forsaken and forgotten in their midst.

That is to say, when we go and consider individual life it is there : in all departments of life it is true ; when we consider national life it is true. Hence what our Master told us in simple form, appealing to the laws of physical nature, is an universal and eternal truth ; and what He seeks to teach I find all the consensus of testimony enforcing as a lesson—that it is a work-a-day principle.

But suppose we admit that the principle is true in national life, that its strength lies in individual readiness to suffer, may we not be tempted then to say : “ What then do we owe to Jesus Christ in connection with this principle ? What has He done for it ? ” I answer that Christ did for that principle that which makes it capable of operating throughout the whole length and breadth of human life. What are the powers that are at work in human life ? The power of the intellect, which enables man to perceive truth ; the powers of the will and mind, which enables man to resolve truth ; and the powers of the affection, which enables a man to follow truth.

The powers of the intellect. Now what Jesus did for that principle was precisely this, that He unfolded to the intellect of man and brought into the consciousness of life this law. Now sometimes we are disappointed if we cannot in all things claim for our Master originality. What is originality ? It is the unfolding to man of a law already existing but hitherto unperceived. His claim to originality lies in this, that He makes clear to man that this is an eternal law. If any man comes to me and tells me that he has discovered what he calls

V a new law, I beg leave to offer him no homage whatever, and to say that he is a mere charlatan and an impostor. Every law is a law of the eternal ages, and no man can claim originality in inventing new laws. Ask Sir Isaac Newton, and he will tell you that he only brought into human consciousness the eternal law of gravity that had been operating since the first moment that the stars were made, and that all he did was to remind men of what had gone on continuously from the creation. The truest benefactor of mankind is not he that brings novelties, new things which are always old, making us thirst for surer and fuller knowledge, but he that makes us acquainted with the laws which underlie our national existence. That is what Christ did for this law ; He brought it into consciousness ; He enabled us to perceive the law of life. He said in effect : " You are all drifting into wrong views of life, the struggle for existence, the struggle for the ascendancy of one man over his fellow-men, of one race over another, of one nation over kindred ones. That is not the law of the Kingdom of God at all ! The law of God is this, the true principle of the power of life is this, that it shall fulfil the law of the seed. You are children of the Eternal Father. Live after the laws which your Father has scattered broadcast at your feet. And just as Newton took the work he had, and let the light fall upon it, so did Jesus Christ tell us that suffering was not to be looked upon as being punishment brought upon wrongdoing, but that suffering lay at the very root of our life,—that it was in Nature itself all around us,—that we were to be followers of Him who sacrificed life itself, and endured suffering and sorrow for us. We must take our education, our affections, our intellect, our will, and go out into the world with them ; we must unbosom our-

selves, break down the barriers of selfishness and indolence, and pour out all the energies of our nature right into the midst of a great world, that the world may blossom out into a new harvest for God.

That was the law to which He gave consciousness ; but did He do no more ? Intellectual perception is not enough. You cannot by such means touch the will. Example is the potent agent of action, and therefore Christ brought the law home to the will of man. And in what way ? Jesus Christ is the Example of life. You teach a law by an example, because you thus stir up the principles of admiration and emulation. I come to the life of Christ, and I find that He is no mere demonstrator of the laws of life, but He is their splendid exemplification. He tells His followers of no single law which He is not ready to submit to Himself. "Suffer it to be so now, for so it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." And therefore He stood to the yoke of the very laws which He Himself had made. And as His life ripened it was the spotless expression of the principle which He laid down, that it was only in pain that the life would bring forth much fruit.

Look what He might have been ! Just in the very commencement of His manhood the tempter offers Him on easy terms the sovereignty of the whole earth ; but He cast the offer indignantly aside. Again, in later life, when the people are musing in their hearts, and wondering whether it would not be a fitting time for Him to stand forth and claim His position as King, He wanders once more into the wilderness, where He would be safe from their expectant incitements. He seems throughout His life to be always forsaking what seems to be the path of ease, the path that man's selfishness would always have followed ; choosing rather the path which led through

suffering, to Gethsemane and to Calvary; knowing that the priceless seed in His hand must first pass through death in order that the harvest of a world redeemed might be secured. He Himself was the seed of which He spake: "Except it fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit."

And as all the past centuries have taught us, He was the most brilliant and successful application of that law. You and I, meeting one another only occasionally in life, feel that it is only seldom that our spirits rise up into capacity for life after its higher laws. We live the greater part of our existence in selfishness, and no single human life is ever a complete example of the law, as men would be if they would live lives of consecration to God. But when we come to Christ, we find in Him only the expression of the real operation of the law. He passes by all the temptations of selfishness, leading a life of entire self-consecration, through humiliation and tears passing to Calvary and the grave. And what is the harvest? His power is the kingdom which is the measure of the world's empire to-day; and nations measure their power by their power to adapt themselves to the principles of life which He laid down. Where is the power of Egypt; where is the strength of Assyria; the wisdom and the genius of Greece? You know that these kingdoms, founded on mere selfishness, have passed away.

But go to the distant missionary fields, where the scattered communities of men seem to be like dispersed grains of sand, and you find that amid the sparse populations the power of the cross of Jesus Christ is at work, and the little church is raised, and the little congregation is gathered from afar; and every land and climate has its little knot of worshippers that are singing their pæan of

praise to Him whom we praise to-day, who laid down His life upon the cross. And so we see to-day that only by dying does the seed bring forth much fruit.

This is what I call appealing to the will of man. We see how we ought to live, and how man might live. Now we see what a splendid influence radiates from the life of those who can sacrifice themselves to some great and noble object, and how thereby men's resolves may be stirred, and they determine that they will consecrate their wills to that service of love. But the work must be carried yet further. A man may clearly perceive a thing, and most earnestly resolve it. You may gain his will, his intellect, but you have not won the man thereby. The root of your actions is not what you perceive to be best, nor in what you will to be right, but it is in what you love. And until you have got hold of a man's affections you have not got hold of the man. It is love which illuminates the actions and the understanding, and lifts men's lives into courses which make the whole life obedient to them. Hence men beheld this life which was so marvellous in its self-surrender, and they began to see that it had an application to their own personal life. The best of them knew most truly that they had fallen below what their better moments told them they ought to be. So we find that their ideal was raised in proportion as Christ told them what they ought to be; and the consciousness of their own life began to be the consciousness of a life in which the tears of humiliation might well be shed. And then there came into their hearts the other truth, that this was the grand Redemption, the Son of man, wearing human flesh, voluntarily assuming that dress, and submitting to laws and principles which would make human life glorious.

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And He was not only an Educator of the Law, but its very embodiment. Behind the law there was the inspiration which led Him to be what He was, and that was the power and the inspiration of love. And when men began to see that behind that stainless life and noble exemplification of God's eternal law there was the yearning heart throbbing for the souls of men, they woke up then, and the apostolic cry broke from thousands of lips : "We love Him because He first loved us."

When He had reached the intellect, He explained the truth ; when He had reached the will, He nerved them to revolve for truth ; but when He reached the heart of man it was that the power of His life might pass into them, and so win the whole of their life into His service, in obedience. This was the secret of the success of the movement of apostolic enterprise : "We love Him because He first loved us."

And as with the apostles of old, so with the enterprise of Christ's servants to-day. They move over the world from city to city, and when you marvel how it is that they still hold out in their little fortresses in the midst of a strange land, where the Gospel shall be preached, where the ordinances of the Church shall be instituted, where the power of the new life shall be manifested amongst men of alien race and of strange habits,—when you marvel at these things, the explanation lies here : "In labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft, in perils," everywhere ! All these things which come upon them, as they came in the lives of the apostles, are endured because the love in their hearts enables them to overcome all in the flame of zeal and devotion. And that power has found expression in the heavenly song : "Thou hast loved us, and washed us



from our sins in Thy own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and Thy Father." We must minister because our lives are under the dominion of that law. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul . . . and thy neighbour as thyself." We are carrying out the great purpose and commandment of our Master, we consecrate our powers to that service, we are priests by the power of Him that has inspired our affections as He has illuminated our understandings and dominated our wills.

That is what Jesus Christ did for this principle; and here I bring my thoughts to this conclusion. Here is the principle which Jesus Christ, our Master, teaches us lies in all life. Here is the principle which the more you investigate the more you find is at the root of every successful career. Here is the principle which Jesus Christ comes and enjoins in His own marvellous life. Here is the principle which He says is to work out into Christian life, if it is to be in any sense a Christ-like life. And the Church recognises that therein lies the expression of what we call Christian experience and Christian life. Take up your Bibles, and there you find that the way in which the Apostle puts the thought to the minds of his hearers is this: Reckon yourselves to have undergone the death that you may achieve life; but live unto God through the power of Him who is your life and your sacrifice. The Bible tells us that the Christian life must be "a new life unto righteousness." And the principle has been incorporated and crystallised into all the Church's teaching and into all Christian thought; and the noblest men in the whole of Christian history have been the men whose lives have been the most splendid examples of this law.

Men who have known what the "death unto sin" has

been, who have struggled in the midst of suffering to break through the husks which have held them back from usefulness, and thrown all their energy into service of God,—these have been the men whose names are set in the forefront of the world. This is the explanation of Christian power.

Surely you may see some exemplification which approaches that in the life of the marvellous Englishman, upon whose fate all our hopes and fears are hanging to-day. The secret of that man's life is that he regarded it as given to be spent for others, and in the power of that thought that his life was given him for the work of His Master. He carried all the energy that lay within his nature into making this the law of his life ; so that when men talked about Christianity as having lost its energies and force, his answer is : "The power of Christianity is not dead. It is only the servant who is not living to the ideal of his Master, who is leaving to fulfil itself the application of his Master's laws, who has proved the uselessness and fruitlessness of a false so-called Christian life. It is only by standing near the Cross that the energy of the fruit-bearing power of the Church will burst into nobler vigour than before."

You will understand that that is the secret of the power of missionary life. You will not ask me to speak of the details of missionary enterprise. They are open to all of us to read. We have not to deal with its successes at all. What I have to ask of you, as those who have been called in Christ's name, and have thereby accepted the plain obligation of its teaching, is that we should die to all efforts that can only end in fruitlessness, and live in the light which is the life of self-surrender. Truth will follow. It is true for churches as well as for individuals.

Whenever any Church has ceased to be missionary, it has ceased to be healthy ; whenever any Church has begun to narrow its efforts, from "prudential" or other motives, it has come near to the time when its candlestick shall be removed. Christianity tottering to its fall? Never! save by the indolence of her sons. Christianity defeated on the coast of Africa? Let the Church of God answer in the words that have come down through the ages: "The gates of hell shall not prevail against this Church"; that is founded upon this eternal principle. It is always in the power of ourselves to make our Church that it shall never disgrace the cause of Christ, but that we shall everywhere overthrow the idea of being ornamental Christians, and bear ever upon our foreheads the mark of our high calling by carrying out the very law by which Christianity can find expression; believe me, it is in reality that Christianity shall exercise itself in the power of blessing others.

You *live* Christianity by the law of self-surrender. Jesus Christ tells us what the results will be: "Except it die it abideth alone; but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit." The curse of selfishness is solitude. It abides alone. Look at life! The man that accumulates wealth lives for himself. He gathers into his coffers, and he entertains his friends; old age creeps upon him. You know what he is; an isolation, a monument in the midst of a wilderness, a monument of miserliness, of selfishness, a monument that stands solitary.

That is what Christ said would always happen. For if a man consults himself only, cares only for evading the responsibility of life, he abides alone. Your spiritual strength is nurtured in the power of sacrifice. Your mental strength is in the power of undergoing the pain of

thought. Your moral strength lies in bracing yourself to duty. The fruit, the results of success, the glorious harvest yet to be that breaks upon your view, depends upon your resolving to be the true and the loyal followers of Jesus Christ. Otherwise you may be comfortable and well thought of, rich and happy in circumstances, but you die, I say, in solitude. Take the other thought ; not one seed perishes that is worth the winning. You will win the power of sending others the true laws of life, of spreading the laws of life between nation and nation ; saturating the world with a nobler conception of what life ought to be, and preparing, therefore, for the great social efforts of creation, and by so doing you are preparing a harvest in the other world. Not a cup of cold water, given to a disciple, will lose its reward. The result is fruit ; and that fruit will come in loving hearts, in loving natures brought into existence and consciousness by the word spoken to them ; by the triumph of the Church, shall I say ? Yes ! and what is far more ; by the triumph of those principles, of which the Church is the depositary in all ages, over the hearts and wills and consciences of men.

That is the harvest which we are called upon to win for Christ. I do not deny that to-day we contend in the presence of difficulty, that we are the labourers in the vineyard bearing the burden and heat of the day. Now is the time of labour and sacrifice ; and we go forth, often sadly, bearing this precious seed ; but I know that our Master has won, and that the inspiration of life is strength ; and I know that our labour shall not be found in vain if carried on in the Lord.

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## II. THE RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD.

BY VERY REV. R. W. CHURCH, D.C.L., DEAN OF ST. PAUL'S.\*

“The firstborn from the dead.”—COL. i. 18.

IN these mysterious and awful words the Apostle describes Him Who, after His agony and death and burial, rose again the third day from the dead, and Whose resurrection brings us here to-day. That issue and result of the dwelling of the Son of God on earth fills St. Paul's mind with its wonder and its triumph. His Master is ever before his eyes as the One Person wearing our mortal nature, Who by His own power, and for the first time, broke through the immemorial, universal law and rule of death. That overwhelming event haunts the thoughts of St. Paul, and supplies a pre-eminent title by which he speaks of the Master whom he serves, and the Saviour whom he adores. He was “the first who should rise from the dead and show light to the people and to the Gentiles.” He was “declared to be the Son of God with power, by the resurrection from the dead.” “He was the firstfruits of them that slept.” He, as St. John, too, heard in his vision, was “the faithful witness and the first-begotten of the dead . . . the first and the last, which was dead and is alive.” First in all things in heaven and earth, He was first to bring into that nature and that race which He had redeemed, the deliverance it had so longed for from the bondage of the grave. “He,” says St. Paul, in his inspired effort to realise the truth, “is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature. By Him were all things created that are in heaven and that

\* Preached at St. Paul's on Easter Sunday morning.

are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers. All things were created by Him and for Him, and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist. And He is the Head of the body, the Church ; He is the beginning ; He is the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He might have the pre-eminence."

"The firstborn from the dead"—"the firstfruits of them that slept"—how familiar the words sound ; and yet, I suppose, it is not always easy to bring home to feeling and thought the real meaning with which they are charged. It is not often that they make and leave on us the impression which they made on the mind of St. Paul. For there was a time—St. Paul had known it—when, however men hoped for immortality and resurrection, their experience had seen no warrant of it. The grave closed over the dead : the Psalm of trust, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell,"—the assurance of prophecy, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," "Thy dead men shall live together with my dead body shall they arise"—was answered by the other voice, the wail of perplexity and un comforted grief, "Dost Thou show wonders among the dead ; or shall the dead rise up again and praise Thee ? Shall Thy lovingkindness be shown in the grave, or Thy faithfulness in destruction ?" And the same spirit which inspired the one thought allowed also the natural outburst expressed in the other. The great servants of God had come and gone ; had lived and died ; and their sepulchres were with their children to this day, monuments of the unbroken power of death. They had hoped, they had believed ; but to hope is not to possess ; to believe is not to see ; and men as yet had only seen what we still see of death—the visible end, the decay which cannot be arrested,



the sinking in the deep waters where no love or strength can retain or deliver ; the vanishing, the disappearing, the extinction. Oh, awful mystery of death ! To-day there is life, and brightness, and power, and thought, and affection deep and strong, and character made rich and beautiful by long discipline, and the wealth of years' experience, and force to govern hearts and wills, or to turn the courses of the world ; and to-morrow, all is vacancy—there is nothing there ; he is never to be spoken to again, nowhere any more to be found ; all has passed like a mist dissolving. “When the breath of man goeth forth, he shall turn again to his earth, and then all his thoughts perish.” That is what we see and know still. Till “the firstborn from the dead” arose, the world had seen nothing else. Once and again, indeed, men had been called back to life, but only again to die.

“But now is Christ risen from the dead ; He has become the firstfruits of them that slept” ; not called back by any voice of power without Him ; not called back to the life of mortality. “Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more ; death hath no more dominion over Him.” This is the great, the immeasurable change. On this earth there has been seen, there lived and walked One who was the Son of man, and yet was never more to taste of death ; One who had borne the image of the earthly, and Who had put on, while yet among us, the image of the heavenly. That of itself was enough to overpower the thoughts of men, accustomed through all generations to see everything end in death : we see and can understand what it was to those who had followed and loved Him : alternate terror and joy, perplexity and dawning bliss, such as earth had never known, doubt, incredulity, the shock of sober, irresistible certainty—

"My Lord and my God." But this was not all. He, for whom had been "loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be holden of it," was not alive again for Himself alone. He was the "firstfruits of them that slept," "the firstborn of the dead." His resurrection was no single, isolated event in the great order of His earthly ministry which it all but closed. It was the first step, the "beginning" of a new and even greater order of His ministry to the creatures whom He had made. It was the tearing asunder "the veil cast over the face of all nations." "It was the opening of the kingdom of God to all believers." It was the reversal, not for one, but for all, of that supposed necessary condition of human existence, that it has to come to an end with the parting breath. It was not merely a pledge, a promise, an example; it was, for all who bear the flesh and blood which He bore, a step into a new world, with new conditions. It was a step, a real step, made, not foreshadowed, from the dominion of nature into the kingdom of grace. For He was the "firstborn among many brethren," and He was the "firstborn from the dead," "the firstfruits of them that slept."

This, if we believe that Christ indeed rose from the dead, is simply and certainly the truth. And yet we hardly feel it. And yet there are those to whom such a change and all its consequences, if believed to be real, seem hardly worth the attention of high moral elevation and refinement. Ah, brothers! to those who have to do with death, to those who have to die, death is, after all, the sternest, strangest, hardest fact of human experience; and anything that abates the sharpness of death is well worthy the lovingkindness of God and the deep thanksgiving of man. The writers of the New Testament

believed that Christ was the firstborn from the dead ; and we see how this altered the whole face of the world and life. It enlarged almost infinitely the interest even of this present mortal life on earth by giving it a meaning and a future ; but it transferred the scene of man's true, and free, and perfect existence to a sphere far beyond this, far beyond the swift passage of the seventy years with their weakness and sorrow, far beyond that transitory but laborious stage, when every day, as it came and went, brought its trial, its temptation, its choice, perhaps its fall—to the sphere where all was eternal and all was accomplished. And it did this, it opened this great moral hope, as never had been done before—not for the great and elect souls of the race only, but for the obscure and down-trodden crowds, the multitudes that none can number—the slave, the lost, the abject, the miserable. For in His own person, Son of God and Son of man, He had made the step from old things to new ; and He had made it for all His brethren. As the Apostle says, “ We are no longer under the law, the old covenant, but under grace.” So we may go on to say, We, the children of the Resurrection, are no longer under the laws of nature, but under the laws of the Spirit ; no longer under death, but under life ; no longer under blind necessity and extinction, but under the living Son of God, “ Who died for us and rose again, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him.” He Who has the keys of the riddle of man's being has opened the door and let in the light, the dazzling, almost blinding, light of the other world on our common-place and feverish lives, on the seeming vanity and waste of the generations of mankind. One after another, they have come, and waxed green like the leaves of summer ; one after another, they

have fallen and vanished like the leaves of autumn. Where are they gone, all these men who lived as we live, whose footprints and whose handiwork are about us and in all the earth, while *they* are seen no more? Have they perished? Did they begin their running with such fulness of life, only that all should be thrown away, when they laid down in the dust and disappeared? So it seemed for all that nature and experience could tell. "We see that wise men also die and perish together, as well as the ignorant and foolish. Man being in honour hath no understanding, but is compared to the beasts that perish." "But now is Christ raised from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept." But now we know what has become of them, the long-forgotten dead. No one soul in that distant, incalculable multitude has been forgotten by God Who made it. It has not ceased to be, though it has long disappeared from here. It lives and waits in its own place till its day comes, and God shall judge the secrets of men according to His Gospel of righteousness and truth. It has not lived for nought; each has had its own trial, its own great chance and opportunity, according to the "riches of God's goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering," even though we cannot see how. Of each life the account has to be given, and God will render to every man according to his deeds. Life has not been in vain or an idle show; each has shown itself as it is; the fruits of to-day have gone on beyond to-morrow, on and onwards till the trial was fulfilled, and they are reaped—"to them that by patient continuance in well-doing, glory, and immortality, eternal life; to them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth but unrighteousness, tribulation, and anguish;—to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile."

“For now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.” He, first and alone, leads the great procession from the prison-house of death, from forgetfulness and nothingness—leads the great triumph of the redeemed of God: the forefathers of the human race, the patriarchs of His Church, saint and prophet and witness to the truth, all who “died in faith not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off,” strangers and pilgrims in the land which, though they knew it not, was their own, and with them, the “holy and humble men of heart”—just and good men in every nation, “fearing God and working righteousness”—all who, though not yet knowing their Redeemer, had the faith which followed the light within them even to death, resolved, “Even though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him”; all those, “who not having the law were a law unto themselves,” the blessed and accepted of Him Who is no respecter of persons, and Who has prepared “glory, honour, and peace to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile.” They sleep, but they are not wasted; they sleep, but they are not forgotten: their Redeemer and ours has them in remembrance, and has shown us what they are to be in that new world which has begun for all of us. For it has begun: how could it but begin, in reality and truth, when once the Deliverer had broken the power and the necessity of the grave? How could that world be the same in which such a thing had happened; in which, indeed, death had given way to life? And so from thence forward the New Testament speaks as if “the powers of the world to come” were already here, changing, vivifying, transforming all things, beginning even in time the work of eternity, even “upon earth the days of heaven.” Think of what he must have

felt about the facts of existence, about the light and power from above which had come to make their home here even while this life was going on, who wrote such words as these :—"The eyes of your understanding being enlightened : that ye may know what is the hope of His calling and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what the exceeding greatness of His power towards us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world but also in that which is to come ; and hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be Head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all. And you hath He quickened, which were dead in trespasses and sins ;—quickened us together into Christ, and raised us up together with Him, and made us sit together with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus ; that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His kindness towards us through Christ Jesus." "Who is He that condemneth ? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, Who is even at the right hand of God, Who also maketh intercession for us."

Is it wonderful that they who thus believed and thus felt should have lived the lives we read of in the New Testament—those strangely mingled lives of pain and happiness, those lives of unquenchable and perpetual gladness, of heroic works and deeds for God, of that joyous contempt of the pangs of sacrifice, of the opinion of the world, of all that can weary or kill the body, or vex and afflict the soul—which is stamped on all the



apostolic history and on every line of the apostles' writings? Is it wonderful that with Christ risen ever before their minds, this should have been the ordinary level of their thoughts and lives? And then to think, my brethren, that these words are as applicable to us as they were to them. What for, but to remind us of this, does Easter come round every year, with all its preparations, and its festal splendours, and its train of following holidays? Is it not to assure us that we, too, in this twilight of the world, neither dark nor bright, may have, ought to have, an inheritance with the saints in light?

Let us indeed humble ourselves when we think of this; but believing in Christ the firstborn from the dead, let it not crush and paralyse us. It is but too certain a fact of experience that the average of human excellence and attainment is pitched very low; but every day there are those who are raising it, and we may, each of us, if we will, be among these benefactors of our race. Think of what one such man, of whom we have been thinking much of late, may have done to raise the sense of duty, the sense of power, the willingness for a clean and true and unreserved service, in the hearts of thousands of his brethren, how—

“The music of a lonely heart may help  
So many lonely hearts unknown to him.”

We have all of us to meet our Master, and he has met his. He, like all of us, had the dust and stains of earth upon him; he, like all of us, needed to the utmost his Master's forgiveness and mercy. But as far as it was possible for man to judge, and we had much to judge by, it seems that, when he went from here, he went with character and will absolutely given up and trained to do what he believed his Master wanted of him; that when

the Master whom he so loved met him on the other side, He met in him a servant who, as far as character and will go, was ready at once for any further task—ready for unclouded communion with Him to whom on earth he had lived so near. He had given his best, and there was no more for him to give here. But what a contrast to the lives of which so many of us are conscious—of us who may have to meet the Master at any time—the imperfect, feeble, indulgent, effortless lives—the poor, ineffective—to borrow a term which but too fully expresses the truth—"malingering" service. Is that the character—unformed, irresolute, uncertain—fit to meet Him who has given us this life to prepare for His service in the other? Compare the character we have spoken of—simple, straight, complete, single-eyed, and whole-hearted—with the mixtures of which we see so many, and where evil counteracts and neutralizes good—high generosity with pride or bad temper, zealous industry with vain love of praise, kindness with sloth, weakness, cowardice. What sort of preparation can that be for the further calls on us that may be beyond the veil—on us, hampered by our small or secret sins, divided in an allegiance, distracted by unconquered bad habits of self-deceit and carelessness? And yet nothing in that character which has thrilled this country as it never has been in our time, nothing in that character of simple and single-eyed Christian manliness, was above the reach of any of us. The man who had delivered an empire, and stood at bay for a year almost alone against failing hope and coming death, was but the same man who had quietly taught the ignorant, and borne with the wretched, and ministered to the sick, and tended the children, in his leisure from his professional work at

Gravesend. It was no splendour of intelligence, it was no gift of power and achievement, which has made him so great and so heroic ; it was the perfect heart, which rung so true for God and duty—whether duty great or small. May He who has given us the certainty of the Resurrection to countervail the awful certainty of death, help us to that preparation of heart and character which befits those who have to do with such great realities ! May He who has called us to immortality, in His mercy give us time till we are ready—ready, as far as creatures can be ready—to look up at Him, to whom they live, to whom they die ! But the days are passing ; let us make haste ; He gives us time, but He cannot delay for long. Remember, we are of those who “look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.”

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## *II. Expository Section.*

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### THE EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS.

BY REV. ADOLPH SAPHIR, D.D. \*

“ Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints of Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons : Grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.”—PHIL. i. 1, 2.

THE origin of the Church in Philippi, and therefore in Europe, which we considered last Sunday morning, is brought before us in a memorable chapter of the Book of

\* Preached at Belgrave Presbyterian Church, Halkin Street, West, November 16th, 1884.

Acts, which is distinguished by its graphic vividness, since Luke, the narrator, was himself an eyewitness of those grand and solemn events which took place in that first European town reached by the feet of the Apostles. Very peaceful was the commencement, for He who has the key of David most gently opened the heart of Lydia, and when her heart was opened to the Gospel her house was also opened to the apostles, and the first Church of Europe met together in her abode.

This peaceful commencement was succeeded by stormy and troublous scenes when the power of Christ was made manifest, subjecting superstition and the demon of heathenism ; and the opposition of the world was aroused against the ambassadors of the Gospel of peace ; but even amid the cruel sufferings which the apostles had to endure, the spirit of joy never departed from them, and the dungeon in which they were was converted into a little heaven, in which was heard the melody of praise and of thanksgiving, and it became the scene where God manifested His power, and where a whole family was turned unto eternal life through faith in Jesus Christ, the Saviour of sinners.

The conclusion of the apostles' stay at Philippi seems to be very abrupt ; at the same time it was not premature, for when the magistrates on the next morning had to go to the prison and ask Paul and Silas to go forth, they thereby acknowledged before the whole world the unblamable character of the apostles and their unjust sufferings. And so after returning for a short time unto the house of Lydia, where they met all the brethren, the apostles were able to leave Philippi with the blessed assurance, which every Christian minister ought to have, that the Word which God sends shall never return unto

Him void, and that every purpose of the Lord must be accomplished, and that everything which we do through Him must prosper.

Now ten years elapsed after the apostles left Philippi, and the believers there continued fast in the faith. Bishops and deacons were selected to watch over their spiritual interests. They continued not merely to believe in the Gospel, but were counted worthy also to suffer for Christ's sake; and during all this time their affection for him who was their spiritual father in Christ never wavered. They took the greatest interest in his work, they sympathised with his sufferings, they identified themselves with the reproach which he had to bear on account of the dear name of our Saviour. What characterised the Church at Philippi was the intense affection which they had towards the Apostle Paul, and the wonderful love and concord which reigned among them. Theirs was the only Church which supported the Apostle and ministered unto his bodily wants. He never accepted any bodily and temporal assistance but from them. In the Epistle to the Corinthians you remember that the Apostle explains very fully the reason why he laboured on his own account, and why also he did not enter into the state of marriage. He shows, first, that he was perfectly free both to marry and to expect the Churches to minister unto his bodily wants, and he urges the point in a three-fold manner: first, by an appeal to common-sense, that in every sphere of life it is true that the labourer is worthy of his hire; and he then goes to a higher point, and says, "Do I not speak only from common-sense? Does not the law show the same thing?" And he proceeds to show that under the Levitical dispensation those who ministered at the altar were supported—a rule which was ratified by our Saviour

Himself; and, thirdly, he rises higher, and shows the Corinthians that if they really receive spiritual benefits and encouragement on their way heavenward, is it not a very small thing for them to minister in temporal things to those who were made by God the channels of their blessings?

Why did he then labour with his own hands? Even in Thessalonica—a Church very dear to him—he was day and night ever busy supporting himself. The reason was simply that thereby he thought he could help to establish the Gospel. He did not wish to attain the highest degree of sanctity in the eyes of the members of the Church; his only reason was, that his whole heart being bent on the spread of the Gospel, he considered that in his peculiar circumstances, by remaining unmarried, and labouring for his own livelihood, he would obviate any doubts against his apostleship, and would make it more simple for people to be under his ministry; and although he was often in hunger and thirst, although he must have often spent the hours of the night in this work of providing for his necessities,—for during the day he was occupied entirely in ministering the Word of Truth,—still did he rejoice in this, and did he glorify in this—that the apostleship which was given to him was performed in this manner. At the same time the Apostle was willing to receive the assistance which the Philippians sent unto him. When he was in prison, and at other times, it was impossible for him to go on with his occupation of tent-making; and as he knew that all things were in the hands of God, he followed the guidance of the Divine Providence in this also. But he rejoiced, because he saw in this liberality of the Philippians fruit of the Holy Ghost; and as it was unto God a sweet smelling savour, so it also



delighted him. But why I mention this point is because of the confidence and affection of the Philippians towards Paul ; and that he would never have accepted their gifts had he not borne them a special and most tender love.

And so after ten years' absence they again ministered unto his wants by sending Epaphroditus, that he might refresh Paul by assuring him of their sympathy and of their gratitude. In response to this expression of love and remembrance he writes them this letter.

But from where? From the ten years after the founding of the Church at Philippi it is not necessary for me to speak of the labours and results which characterised that period in Berea, in Athens, in Corinth—wherever the Apostle Paul was led to dwell. The only point necessary to bring before you is this—that *he was in Rome at the time, and a prisoner*. His great desire was to see Rome. "I must go to Jerusalem," he said, "in order to minister to the saints there, and I must see Rome." Why? For the simple reason that he was the Apostle of the Gentiles, and Rome was the centre of the world; and as he was sent to bear witness for Christ among the Gentiles, his heart was full of affection for all nations, and he was anxious to go to that place, especially as that was the then central seat of all power and civilisation.

Jerusalem and Rome are full of great contrasts. The Book of Acts may be entitled "From Jerusalem to Rome." Jerusalem is the centre of God's people. From Jerusalem the knowledge and worship of God proceeds; Jerusalem was chosen of God to be the centre of His kingdom; Jerusalem is the City of David; and Jerusalem for ever is the city of the great King, David's Son and David's Lord. Rome is the centre of the world power;

it is that fourth great and mighty beast which was beheld in the vision of Daniel ; it is the fourth world monarchy ; it is characterised by trick ; it is strong in its own strength and cruelty ; it is notorious by its self-assertion and cunning ; it is the representative of the world power ; it stands in itself independent of God. And yet at the same time, though Jerusalem and Rome are thus characterised, we must remember that Jerusalem, holy unto the Lord, rejected and stoned the prophets, and killed them that were sent unto her, and at last filled up the measure of her iniquity by the treatment of the Lord of Glory. And it rejected the apostles when Stephen was stoned, while Rome protected the Apostle Paul against the cruelty and rage of his countrymen, who would otherwise have put him to death. And being the home of the Gentiles, Rome was to be evangelised, and the whole Roman Empire was to receive the truth from the sufferings and testimony of the Christians. Yet ere I pass from this, in order that you may fully enter into the mind of the Apostle Paul, enlightened by the Holy Ghost, let me say that Jerusalem always remains the Holy City. During the time of the Gentiles, but no longer, shall Jerusalem be trodden down by the feet of the Gentiles. Rome, of which we must remember three things—that it put to death the Lord Jesus, executing the will of the Jews against all legality ; Rome, that destroyed Jerusalem with a cruel destruction ; Rome, that shed the blood of the saints of God for two centuries ; Rome, that afterwards became the great centre of the great apostacy, the scourge of Europe—that is the character of Rome and the history of Rome ; and when Rome is made instrumental in the spread of the Gospel in the apostolic ages and the first centuries, we can only see in it the wonderful

mercy of God ; and throughout the whole history of God in His dealings with His people, we see how unsearchable are His ways, and His thoughts past finding out.

But though the Apostle Paul said he would like to and must see Rome, little did he think he would see it *as a prisoner*. As a prisoner, he who was appointed by Jesus Christ to be the Apostle of all nations ; how strange are the ways of God, how contradictory seem to be His leadings, how perplexing to all human reason ! What God does we often think to be foolishness, whereas He seeth our wisdom to be folly. "How beautiful are the feet of him who brings good tidings" ; but his feet were limited to the prison chamber. This chosen vessel of God, whom He was utilising and sending forward, becomes a prisoner, and is in bonds. Wonderful ways of God ! Yes, he had to become a prisoner—two years in Cæsarea, and more than two years in Rome. Four years out of such a valuable life, as human reason would say, cramped and dwarfed. God knows, and God only knows, how to promote the interests of His kingdom ; and rest assured that that imprisonment was the wisdom of God to Paul himself ; and it enabled him to bear testimony to King Agrippa, and to lead to that exclamation, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian" ; and it enabled him to save the lives of those with him in shipwreck ; and in the island of Melita it enabled him to show the power of the Lord Jesus Christ ; and in Rome it enabled him to proclaim Christ, for the vision came to him : "Be of good cheer, Paul ; for as thou hast testified of Me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome."

Now, can you imagine this Apostle Paul as a prisoner, chained, as the custom was, unto a soldier ? Have you not often seen, with the mind, the Apostle with those

"bonds"? Do you remember, when he stood before King Agrippa, and had spoken to him of Christ and His Gospel, how he was so filled by the assurance of his happiness in Christ, that out of the abundance of his heart he cried, "I would to God that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both, almost and altogether, such as I am"? But as he spoke he felt the fetters as he lifted up his hands, and added, "*except these bonds.*" How full of joy in Christ; how sure that he was the Lord's servant and witness! How small and insignificant appeared to him that little speck of time compared with a boundless eternity! How unspeakably beautiful the love of Jesus, without which all things appeared most pitiful to him! Or if you had seen him writing to the Church of Colosse. As he wrote the salutation he felt his bonds, and added, "Remember my bonds." "Paul, a prisoner," he wrote in the Epistles to Philemon, the Ephesians, Colossians, and Philippians. Do you not know the chains when he writes and describes the different parts of the panoply, the breastplate, and the helmet, and everything that constituted the armour of every one ready to withstand the enemy? When we remember the circumstances, it will appeal to every heart as he writes to his dearly beloved Philippians, his joy and his crown.

Let me explain the peculiarity which distinguishes the Epistle to the Philippians. In the first place, it is an Epistle characterised by friendship and affection. He does not call himself officially an apostle, but simply a "servant" of Jesus Christ. The bishops and deacons were only mentioned secondarily, because he wished to write to them individually. He pours out on them all the wealth of his heart's love, and expresses his love to them in the strongest terms; he tells them of his circumstances

as a friend to a friend. There breathes throughout the whole Epistle an atmosphere of confidence, and friendship, and mutual delight.

The second characteristic of the Epistle to the Philippians is this : *he had no fault to find with them* ; he had no sin to rebuke ; he had no error to refute ; he had no doctrine to defend. It is peace. There is no Epistle so peaceful. There is no Epistle, in one sense of the word, which contains so little doctrine ; but at the same time even, owing to this, there is no Epistle which brings more clearly before us the doctrines which were held by the Apostle and by the early Christians. From the very fact that there is no formal setting forth of doctrine, we see it more clearly—that Jesus was God, the Son of God who existed from all eternity, and Who, although He was in the form of God, humbled Himself and died the death of the Cross ; and secondly, that He will come again, and will transfigure our vile bodies, and make them like unto His own, and they shall attain unto perfection, but not till then ; and thirdly, that righteousness is not of the law, but in Christ Jesus, and every one who believes in Him ; and fourthly, that all the guidance of our lives and our earthly pilgrimage are in His hands. The Epistle to the Philippians is full of love and friendship ; and because it does not systematically set forth the doctrines held by Paul it therefore shows them more clearly.

The Epistle to the Philippians is *an Epistle of experience*. If you want to know Christian love, only Christian love, you will find, is in the Epistle to the Philippians. It is exactly the 23rd Psalm. He never mentions sin in this Epistle. He contrasts righteousness by faith with righteousness by works. He is assured that he can do all things through Jesus Christ. It is the experience of

the Christian walking in the Spirit, and always beholding in Christ all that pertains to life everlasting.

Fourth characteristic. *Here we have the portrait of the Apostle Paul.* Oh, how difficult it is to get a photograph!—not the peculiar expression of the moment, but *the* expression that characterises the countenance. For a man may look very bright, or anxious, or calm, or courageous, and yet the portrait may not give his real countenance. In other Epistles we see the Apostle Paul in various attitudes, in various frames of mind—moved sometimes, sometimes anxious, sometimes indignant, sometimes persuasive. In the Epistle to the Philippians all the features of the apostolic countenance are at perfect rest. His whole character, as Christ has formed it within him, is photographed there unto us; and therefore is it that so many of his sayings in this Epistle we should never forget: “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me”; “Rejoice in the Lord”; “To write the same things to you to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe.” All these sayings show to us that the imprisonment of the Apostle had yielded the peaceable fruit of righteousness; and in this Epistle it has pleased God the Holy Ghost to give unto the Church of all ages the ideal of the Christian character; the comment on the 23rd Psalm.

Lastly, this Epistle is *characterised by joy from beginning to end.* Not but that the Apostle had a thousand sorrows in his heart. When Epaphroditus recovered Paul said: “God had mercy upon him; and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have *sorrow upon sorrow.*” The joy which characterises this Epistle does not only float on the surface, but it is consistent with the expression in the second chapter of the Epistle: “Work out your own



salvation with fear and trembling." Yet everything is joy unto him. To rejoice in the Lord is the sum and substance of his exhortation; it is the Gospel which he preached in that prison unto that jailer, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," which is here expounded and unfolded with celestial joy.

Note the salutation unto the saints—*grace and peace.*

What is meant by a "saint"? People talk about *holiness*; now, taking only what is stated in the Bible, what is meant by holiness? It means this: God, Who alone is holy, who in His holiness desires to communicate Himself unto His people, sets apart a people unto Himself, severing them from the world; and from that very fact they are constituted holy. Thus the people of Israel were a holy people, because a holy God chose them and redeemed them, and severed them from all nations, and brought them unto Himself. The word "holy" never occurs in the Book of Genesis, only from Exodus onward, because it is only the redeeming of His people and the bringing of them into covenant with Himself which makes that people holy. Wherever God reveals Himself is holy ground; whatever God takes into His service is holy. No man can consecrate himself. God is the only One. To be in communion with God is to be holy. *We are holy because we are called, not called because we are holy.* The idea of holiness in Scripture is most wonderful and full of consolation. Our first idea of holiness is like Isaiah's, "Woe is me, for I am undone." You will find that holiness and redeeming and cleansing grace go together. "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts" is He, and *therefore* "Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory," and *therefore* Isaiah is made holy. "I am the Holy One of Israel, thy Redeemer." The moment we believe we are

holy. That is the first blessing, that is the second blessing, that is the last blessing, and it must be repeated every day.

"To all the *saints*." That has no reference to their moral qualifications or to their own work, but it describes the position God has given unto them through faith in Christ Jesus, just as the thief on the cross was a saint the moment he believed. Yet we are continually reminded that we are to walk as becomes saints.

"To all the saints *in Christ Jesus*." How it shows the divinity of Jesus! Only of Jehovah can it be said that He has saints; for only He is holy, and He alone can make any one holy by taking him unto Himself. Ananias said unto the Lord, "He has persecuted *Thy saints*." When Jesus comes with His saints we adore Him as God.

The Apostle says "grace" and "peace." The most wonderful thing in God is Christ, the most wonderful thing in Christ is grace, and the most wonderful manifestation of grace is when we are sinners. "Grace" does not mean the kind and merciful disposition of God; but that Divine, Eternal, and special favour of God in Christ Jesus who died, the Just for the unjust. This grace means the grace of God which bringeth salvation; which finds us lost, and rescues us; which finds us naked, and clothes us with the best robe; which finds us lifeless, and restores us; which finds us in the depths, and enthrones us in heavenly places with God. By grace you have been saved. Grace is that exceeding abundant favour of God which brings with it faith and love. From Jesus, Who died for us, there comes a sense of His expiring love into our souls; He draws us unto Himself, and creates in us faith in the very love which suffered on the Cross. And as Christ creates within us faith and love, so it displays us everywhere no

longer under the law; the grace of God, which bringeth us salvation, teaches, trains, sustains, that we should forsake ungodliness and unworthiness, and live soberly and righteously. Grace is the element in which we live and the foundation on which we stand; grace is the refuge unto which we fly; grace is the cordial which revives us; grace is the strength all-sufficient for us; "By grace," says the Apostle Paul, "ye are saved through faith." Grace comes from hope; and faith is the sum of glory, for we "know he whom He justified He also glorified." "Grace be unto you." Day by day it is to be renewed, and this is the character of grace, that once it begins it continues unto the end. Every time the Holy Ghost explains to you the Scriptures, every time you feel in your heart a gush of love and gratitude towards Jesus, every time you realize that your sins have been blotted out, every time you have a sure hope of the glory that is to follow—what is it else but grace; grace, the very first grace that visited you?

And if grace is indeed so, from the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, then, *and then only*, is there *peace*. Dear Christians, always distinguish between what God gives and the reflection of what God gives. You see a little boat out at sea, and in that boat you see a child asleep. And yet the boat is constantly moving, for everything that affects that mighty ocean reaches that boat, and even in that boat the unconscious babe moves to and fro. For there is no peace on that ocean. But since Jesus died on the Cross, and has met and conquered Satan, and vanquished death and blotted out sin, there is peace, perfect peace, and the love of God uninterrupted for the repentant sinner. That ocean is full of love, but with no disturbance upon it. Oh, when Jesus comes, as He came after the Resurrection, when the disciples were filled with fear, He

says, "Peace be with you," or when Thomas was disturbed with unbelief He says, "Peace be with you"; and when the disciples of Emmaus returned unto the apostles He comes again, and says, "Peace be unto you"!

Grace—this must be continually renewed unto you—grace and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Only one word more. Every Lord's Day, and for many years, you know you have heard these blessed and solemn words, "The grace of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with you." *See to it that you remember them in Eternity.*

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### *III. Outlines of Sermons.*

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#### I. THE POWER OF CHRIST'S RESURRECTION.

BY WM. M. TAYLOR, D.D. \*

WHEN Paul writes to the Romans that, "like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we should also walk in newness of life," his words state a fact, and imply a principle. The fact stated is that Christ was raised from the dead into a distinctively new life by the glory of the Father; the principle implied is that faith in that fact should have a powerful effect on our character and conduct; and both of these are of the greatest importance. It cannot, therefore, at this season be inappropriate to meditate for a little on them both.

The resurrection of Christ was not a mere return by Him to the sort of life which He had been living before the crucifixion, but rather an advance to a higher form of human existence.

\* Preached at Broadway Tabernacle, New York.

He did not, if we may so express it, come back out of the grave, but rather passed through it, and emerged on its further side, to a new life in a body, which, though it had marks of identity with that which had been nailed to the cross, was yet, in other respects, so different from it as to give us some idea of what Paul means when he says: "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." His resurrection, therefore, was an entirely different thing from the raising of Lazarus, or of the widow's son at the gate of Nain, or of the daughter of Jairus. These cases were resuscitations, or restorations, pure and simple. The reanimated persons came back to their old homes, their old occupations, their old relations. They were their former selves in every respect, and ultimately died again. But it was not so with Christ. His resurrection was to "newness of life," in a sense somewhat different from that in which Paul uses the words, but yet in one that is very real and very true. He did not resume His former relations; for He said unto Mary: "Touch Me not." He did not take up His residence in any one place, as if He had again become a denizen of earth. He was not continuously in the company of some one or other of His former friends. He did not become the guest of any of His followers. There were many things about His resurrection body which manifested real identity with that which was crucified. Then, on the other hand, it was so different therefrom, that He could appear to His followers and disappear from them at pleasure; could pass from place to place in a marvellously short space of time, and could enter a chamber even when its doors was shut. It was allied with and rooted in His former body, and yet so ethereal—or, as our version of Paul's word has it, so "spiritual"—in its texture as to be above the sphere of the operation of those laws to which ordinary material substances are subjected. Hence, His resurrection was not a return, but an advance; not a coming back into His former life, but a bursting forward into a nobler humanity, over which death had no longer power.

Now, faith in such a fact ought to have a mighty influence on our character and conduct. It ought to raise us up into a moral and spiritual life which shall be as much "newer" than that which we were living before, as the post-resurrection life of Christ was than that which preceded His crucifixion. Retaining the marks of our individual identity, we should be raised by that faith as much above the influences of the world as the spiritual body of the Lord after His resurrection was above the material laws to which our natural bodies are continually subject. And if we were to let it take full possession of our souls, it would produce this great result.

In particular, it would give to us a new aim or ambition in life. Too commonly men are content to "mind earthly things." They seek for riches, honour, fame, pleasure, power, and other like objects of a merely temporal sort, as if there were nothing higher or nobler inviting their attention. But the resurrection of Christ demonstrates that death does not end all; and so, by stirring us up to lay hold on eternal life, it opens up a new and worthier field for our ambition. It shows us that there is another existence before us, of which this is but the outer porch, and it bids us aim after honour and happiness in that. It tells us that there are things above, and bids us set our affections on them. It unveils for us the future life, with all its infinite possibilities, and urges us, at whatever sacrifice, to make sure of its blessedness. When Michael Angelo had examined the work of one of his pupils, and had observed that it lacked breadth of treatment, he took his pencil and wrote upon it: "*Amplius*"—wider. Now, just that the resurrection of Christ has written, if they could but see it, over men's earthly lives. They are narrow in their range, and limited, for the most part, to this present existence; but the great Easter fact says: "*Amplius*." Let your thoughts go forward into eternity. Let your plans expand so as to include the things which are above.

Then, in seeking to live thus above the gravitating influences



of the present life, our faith in the resurrection of Christ will give to us a new support. No one can read the Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistles of the New Testament, without perceiving that the early disciples derived great strength from their thorough acceptance of the fact that Jesus had risen from the dead. Thus, Paul writes : "Knowing that He which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you : *for which cause we faint not.*" And there is a wonderful difference apparent in the dispositions and actions of the original apostles, according as we view them before and after the resurrection of their Lord. Prior to that event they were timid, halting, irresolute, clinging to the hope of earthly glory, and seeking worldly security. After it, they were brave, resolute, spiritual, sublime. Now, how shall we account for this difference ? By the descent of the Holy Spirit, will be the reply. But, then, the Spirit works by means ; and the means through which, in this instance, He accomplished this marvellous change was their belief in and realization of the fact that their Lord and Master had risen from the dead and ascended into heaven. He was not to them as one dead. He was to their faith a living Person—their King, Deliverer, Protector, Friend. They knew that they should see Him again, and be received by Him at last ; so they faced every opposition and braved every danger for His sake. Now, it is here where most of us are at fault. We forget that He who rose again is living in His resurrection body still. If one doubts that statement, then let him ask himself whether, when he thinks of Jesus, he is conscious of making any difference in his conception between the present mode of existence of the ascended Christ, and that of some departed dear one, who has recently been taken from his side ? That is the key of the whole matter here, and may unlock the secret of much of our spiritual weakness. To think of Christ now merely as we think of the disembodied dead—"the spirits of just men made perfect"—is not to believe in and realize His resurrection, and so to miss

all the support which it gives for present growth and conflict. We cannot continue long to live contrary to the world's maxims and customs, if we are not upheld by a strength which comes not from the earth. We must have meat to eat, of which the world knows not. We must be able, in times of conflict and weariness, to fall back upon some support that is stronger than earth can furnish. And we find that in the fact that our Lord Jesus Christ is living yet in our nature, in the heavenly world, a human Brother and yet an almighty Friend, according as the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews has said, "Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession." There is, in one of the valleys of Perthshire, a tree which sprang up on the rocky side of a little brook, where there was no kindly soil in which it could spread its roots, or by which it could be nourished. For a long time it was stunted and unhealthy, but, at length, by what may be called a wonderful vegetable instinct, it sent a fibre out across a narrow sheep-bridge, which was close beside it, and that fixed itself in the rich loam on the opposite bank of the streamlet, whence it drew sap and sustenance, so that it speedily became vigorous. Now what that tiny bridge was to the tree, the resurrection of Christ is to the believer. The Christian life on earth is growing in an unkindly soil; and if it could find no better nourishment than that can furnish it would die; but, taught by the Holy Spirit of God, through faith in the resurrection and ascension of the Lord, it sends a rootlet across the river into the better land, and draws from that all the support it needs to keep it fresh and healthy. The Christian's citizenship is in heaven, "from whence also he looks for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change the body of our humiliation, that it may be fashioned like unto His own glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able to subdue all things to Himself." That keeps him from fainting. That rallies him in weariness. That raises him in torpor.

He has been "begotten again to a living hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away." His "life is hid with Christ in God," and, amid all his experiences, one hope shines ever clear and steady before him, as with the lustre of a star. I will behold Thy face in righteousness. I shall be satisfied when I awake with Thy likeness."

Thus, faith in the resurrection of Christ, when that is intelligently accepted, becomes a potent factor in the Christian life; and the more we ponder that great fact in its proper light, as being not a return to a former mode of existence, but an advance into a higher, the more shall we understand and experience what Paul meant when he prayed that he might know Him, and "the power of His resurrection." It is the widening, elevating, supporting influence in our Christian experience; the means, in the hands of God's Spirit, of creating and sustaining the "newness" of that life which alone has a right to be called Christian. So, at the return of this greatest of all the days in the Christian year, no questions are more appropriate for self-examination than these: "If it be true that Christ has risen from the dead, am I living as I ought to live? Has my faith in His resurrection raised me to walk in newness of life?" God give us grace to answer these questions honestly, and to act accordingly.

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## II. THE VOICE OF GOD.\*

BY REV. PREBENDARY SCOTT, D.D.

"The Lord sitteth upon the flood; yea, the Lord sitteth King for ever."—  
PSALM xxix. 10.

SUCH is the Bible version of the words which, in the more familiar language of our Prayer-Book, are as follows: "The Lord sitteth above the water flood; and the Lord remaineth a

\* Delivered at St. Paul's Cathedral, September 6th, 1884.

King for ever." The form of the expression brings before us the peculiar conception of the universe in the ancient Hebrew mind. Even in the narrative of the Creation in Genesis, the waters above the firmament are said to be separated from the waters below the firmament, and many similar passages might be quoted. The idea was, that as the shores rose out of the sea, and the rain descended from heaven, so there must be motion below and around the land, as if the earth was standing upon pillars, and there was a reservoir of water above. In the account of the Deluge the windows of heaven are said to have been opened,—this is, as if the reservoir had been opened. And accordingly in this Psalm the idea is that the waters were poured down from this store of waters above the firmament, while, above all, beyond all the waters and the firmament, was the throne and habitation of the Eternal when He was sitting in royal state, ruling in majesty for ever. And this, "The Lord sitteth upon the flood; yea, the Lord sitteth King for ever," was a natural idea for the Hebrew poet to express when his mind was dwelling upon the thunder-cloud from which the waters descended.

We may smile perhaps at these theories of the childhood of the world, and talk of electrical action, of attraction and repulsion, and of all the modern phraseology of modern science; but it is possible to see the order and law of the universe—that is, its varying and unceasing succession of phenomena, the living garment in which the power is displayed—and to forget the Source and Giver of all. How many, alas! of the most brilliant leaders of science and knowledge, pioneers of the army of explorers, who are for ever striving to make Nature give up her secrets, think that there is in reality no law guiding all, nothing but a blind persistent force. Even the existence of life, the existence of the reason by which they argue, and speak, and work, cannot persuade them of the existence of a Supreme, Intelligent, Almighty Being, in whom we and all existing creatures live, and move, and have our being.

Far otherwise is it in Scripture, far otherwise is it with the Christian believer, and far otherwise is it with the Psalmist whose words are before us to-day. The warmth of sunshine, the refreshing rain, the springs which well up water for the parched soil, the sea, with its teeming life, all speak of the mercy and the marvellous power of God.

This Psalm is probably one of David's own composition—perhaps written as he was in early life tending his father's flocks, or later, when he was in the wilderness hiding from the anger of Saul ; it was here that the terrors of the storm—so beautifully depicted in the Psalm—would come most vividly before him.

But what is most instructive for us, and at the same time most important, is not the grandeur of the picture, is not the impressiveness of the language, but the realization of the presence of God. It is the same through all the historical books of the Old Testament. What is it that makes these differ from all other records of a like character ? Not the facts recorded,—which are not in substance different from what other heathen nations have in their annals,—but the difference is that God is recognized in this history, that blessings are described as His, and judgments are recognized as sent by Him. This is what separates and distinguishes Jewish history from all other history. It shows to us how the arrogance and ambition of kings were in truth fulfilling God's purpose and judgment, how the sins of kings were visited upon their kingdoms, how trusting faith found its reward. And these things are written for our instruction and consolation. The lesson which the Jewish nation had been taught in days of prosperity bore fruit in the days of adversity. When their city was in ashes, when of the temple no stone had been left upon another, when the offerings and sacrifices, the daily worship, the yearly festival, all the appointed means of approach to God were done away, when the nation itself had been carried away captive—in that

season of darkness and gloom some of the most spiritual utterances of the Jews were penned. Through the darkness and gloom of his surroundings the believer was taught the lesson that the best offering to God was a broken and contrite heart, that God was a Spirit, and needed to be worshipped in spirit and in truth ; they were taught to rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him in the assurance that His hands were leading them, and that He was ruling and instructing them—inscrutably to them, but none the less certain, that He would give them deliverance in His own way and at His own time, that He was sitting above the flood ruling and directing the very storm itself to a predetermined issue. For instance, we read in the 118th Psalm—one dating from the time of the restoration, when the people had been delivered from their captivity and the new temple had been built—"This is the Lord's doing ; it is marvellous in our eyes."

But the calamities had also been the Lord's doing. He had shown Himself a God of judgment before He appeared as a God of mercy. *Still there was the conviction that He was ruling the storm*, that even in their captivity He remained a sure refuge. This conviction it was which enabled the captives to look upward, to rejoice in hope. And if the faith of the ancient Jews was so strong, if that star of hope shone so brightly over them in their captivity, how much more is it our duty, how much more are we bound, to rejoice in hope to whom the fuller light has been granted, and life and immortality brought to light in the Gospel ? "I will not fear," said the Psalmist, "though the hills be moved, though the water flood drown me ; for the Lord sitteth above them a King for ever." The Psalmist of old feels no doubt, no hesitation amid all the darkness and utter helplessness, as it seemed, of his bondage. God, Who judged, would in His own time grant his deliverance, and those who trust Him know that all things work together for good.

This is the lesson we have to learn. Though the earth



itself seem ready to melt away, the Lord is still above, a sure refuge to those who put their trust in Him. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee; because he trusteth in Thee." This is the only sure rest, the only consolation that cannot fail. If our lot falls in days of trouble and anxiety, if we know not where to turn on earth for help, if we have struggles and contention in our own land or difficulties and confusions in our foreign relations,—what then? Is not history repeating itself? Our lot is far lighter than that of the early Christian community or of the ancient Jews; and yet we see that the early Christians, as the Jewish people, were unshaken in their faith through all outward difficulties and distress. They knew that their souls were in God's hands. So if infidelity be abroad in our streets and cities—what then? Let us hold fast our confidences firm unto the end. Elijah seemed to be alone faithful to God in Israel; his constancy had its crown and reward. Whatever may befall, whatever darkness and gloom may seem to rest on our path, and whatever discouragements may seem to attend our efforts, yet each of us at least can strive to live a more faithful, and purer, and truer lot; each can meet his lot, whatever it may be appointed for him, in the assurance that the Lord sitteth above the flood and rules the tempest.

Such citizens as these are the members of the New Jerusalem, the salt of the earth, the righteous for whose sake the guilty city may be spared. Such may each of us be, such we are called upon to be; and, with God's help, so striving, so trusting, so resting in Him, we may know that He is ruling in the kingdom of men, and never faileth them that put their trust in Him.

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## IV. *Outlines on Texts for the Church's Year.*

(WITH FULL REFERENCES TO SERMONS ON THE SAME.)

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[We here commence a unique and valuable feature of the CONTEMPORARY PULPIT, which will be of vast service to all preachers. It is intended to make it permanent. The outlines and references are prepared with great care specially for the CONTEMPORARY PULPIT, and all rights are reserved.—ED. C.P.]

### I.—FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

*(From the Gospel.)*

#### THE METHOD OF DIVINE TEACHING.

“I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.”  
—JOHN xvi. 12.

*Introduction.* Remarkable that three out of five gospels for Sundays after Easter should be taken from this discourse. But—

(a) In each case the eve of a departure.

(b) Language of one period not unsuited to the other.

During the forty days Christ spoke about the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. Result may be seen in apostolic epistles. But it was especially after the descent of the Holy Ghost, and through Him that our Lord was to say the “many things.”

I. *It was Jesus Himself who would speak about Himself* through the Spirit's teaching. All that He had done, said, and suffered, would be suffused as with light from heaven, and its real meaning made manifest. We are told in these days that we must go for unadulterated Christianity to Christ Himself, that “Paulineism” is an outgrowth from original Christianity. Text teaches, however, that Christ did not mean us to accept as true only what should fall from His own lips, but also teachings of His inspired apostles. And if we ask why He personally did not teach everything the answer is, “Ye cannot bear them now.”

II. These words apply—

1. *To the apostles.* For them the reception of truth a gradual process. The Spirit not yet being given, they had only their natural resources to fall back upon for understanding of Christ's teaching.

2. *To the Christian Church in all ages of which the apostles were the representatives.* Not that fresh truths would be added from time to time. Later ages both might and must explain apostolic teaching. But the "many things" do not include continually added doctrines. History of a Church, like that of an individual, one of experiences, and in this field God is continually saying new things to His Church. Illustrations—History of our own country. What God is teaching us to-day would have been unintelligible to our ancestors. So with history of Israel; so with Church of Christ. Its earlier centuries would not have understood what He has said to the later. Can we suppose that He has yet said His last word to Christendom?

3. *To the life of each individual, and especially each Christian.*

(a) Human mind has its stages of growth. Truths which would be received at last stage unintelligible in first or second.

(b) *Spiritual life* has also its stages. Repentance; knowledge of moral evil, necessity of holiness, atoning work of Christ; spiritual illumination; union with God. Here again the higher experiences would be unintelligible at stages less advanced.

*Application.* (a) What may not each one of us have to learn which we could not bear to learn now?

(b) Duty of hope and patience in respect of the as yet veiled future, and the unanswered questions which haunt all thoughtful minds.

Canon Liddon.

St. Paul's Cathedral, April 22nd, 1883.

REFERENCES TO OTHER SERMONS, ETC., ON SAME TEXT.

*Christian World Pulpit.* "Our Lord's Last Discourse," W. Roberts, vol. xi., p. 237; "Our Lord's Parting Words," Bishop Bickersteth (the late), vol. xiv., p. 225; "Continuing Life of Christ on Earth," Basil Wilberforce, vol. xvi., p. 22; "Intentional Limitations of Christ's Teaching," Henry Bonner, vol. xvi., p. 84.

"Inspiration Measured by our Capacity," Samuel Greg, "Layman's Legacy," p. 199; Dr. Arnold, 2nd series, sermon 10; "Unspoken Words," R. H. Story, D.D., "Creed and Conduct," p. 290; "The Changed Aspect of Christian Theology," Stopford Brooke, 2nd series, p. 1; "Christ's Reticence in Teaching Truth," sermons by John Ker, p. 302; and (with chap. xiv. 12) "Want of Progress," Professor Momerie, "Defects of Modern Christianity," pp. 33 and 44. See also Parker's "Ecce Deus," p. 17 (cheap edition).

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## II.—ROGATION SUNDAY; FIFTH AFTER EASTER.

*(From Second Morning Lesson.)*

### BELIEVING AND SEEING.

"Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig-tree, believest thou? Thou shalt see greater things than these. And He saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man."—JOHN i. 50, 51.

*Introduction.* In these words our Lord at once accepts the faith of Nathanael and his fellows, and gives them a glimpse of how much they have yet to learn. Nathanael had said, "Thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel." *He* proclaims Himself the medium of all intercourse between heaven and earth.

I. *Our Lord's mighty promise to His new disciples.* Christ's words may be either question or affirmation—"believest thou?" or "thou believest." In neither case doubt expressed. In either case recognition of reality of Nathanael's confession and belief. First time that word *belief* came from Christ's lips. An epoch in the world's history.

Second part of verse 50 has its proper fulfilment in gradual manifestation of Christ's person and character. But we may fairly draw from it lessons for ourselves as to—

#### 1. *Faith and discipleship.*

(a) Our Lord here shows that He regards exercise of faith as synonymous with being a disciple.

(b) He employs word *belief* without giving any definition of what is to be believed. He Himself the true object of faith. We may believe a proposition, but faith must grasp a person.

(c) How widely different from our *creed* was Nathanael's (knew nothing of atonement, etc.), and yet how identical with ours was his *faith*. Contents of creeds may differ, whilst the element of faith remains the same.

2. *Faith and sight.*

A great deal about *seeing* in the context ("Come and see," etc.). Here a double antithesis:—

"I saw thee"; "Thou shalt see Me"; and "Thou believest—that is thy present; thou shalt see—that is thy hope for the future."

In the loftiest region of spiritual experience you must believe first in order that you may see. Only if we trust Christ—

(a) Do the mightiest truths that affect humanity stand clear before us;

(b) Do we get a living experience of facts and principles which are all mists and darkness to men except through faith.

While, then, it is true of the coarse things which you can handle that "seeing is believing," in regard to God and spiritual truth, believing is seeing.

3. *Faith and progress.*

All faith at first rudimentary and infantile, but it starts its possessor on an unending course. While it lives it must grow and get nearer to the great centre. If *you* have not seen "greater things" than you did at the outset of your Christian career your faith has broken down if it has not expired.

II. *Our Lord's witness to Himself and His own dignity* (ver. 51). He bases this great utterance upon nothing but His own word. Prophets must ever say, "Thus saith the Lord." He ever says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you" (Heb. vi. 13).

"Hereafter" possibly not genuine, or if retained = "from henceforth." "Heaven open and angels," etc. Story of Jacob at Bethel applied to Nathanael, "An Israelite indeed," etc. Lo, says Christ, you shall see, not in a vision, but in a waking reality, that ladder between heaven and earth, and angels of God moving upon it on their errands of mercy. Who or what is this ladder? Christ. He the sole medium of communication between heaven and earth, inasmuch as He is the medium of all revelation (John iii. 13). He is the ladder, because—

1. In Him the sense of separation and the fact of separation are swept away.

2. By Him all Divine blessings, grace, helps, etc., come, angel-like, into our weak and needy hearts.

3. Through Him our poor desires, intercessions, sighs, confessions, rise to God (John xiv. 6).

The one thing needful is our faith. "Believest thou? Thou shalt see."

*A Maclaren, D.D.*

From "A Year's Ministry," Second series.

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### III.—ASCENSION DAY.

(*From Second Morning Lesson.*)

#### CHRIST'S ASCENSION.

"And He led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up His hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while He blessed them, He was parted from them, and carried up into heaven."—LUKE xxiv. 50, 51.

*Scene*, Mount of Olives. At time of our Lord's temptation He was made to contemplate all the kingdoms of this world and the glory of them from a high mountain. It was on a high mountain that He was transfigured. When work of the day was over, it was to a high mountain that He went up to pray. When the people wanted to make Him a King, He departed into a mountain by Himself alone. And it was from a mountain that He now ascended into heaven. The charm of His name lingers still on those hills of Israel.

*Time*. Some think early morning, others darkness of the night, but would not the brightness of noon be more harmonious with the nature of the event? Darkness at crucifixion. First rays of dawn



greeted resurrection. But it would seem, in the absence of any direct evidence to the contrary, fitting that Christ should enter into His glory when the sun had attained its highest meridian. Take that for what it is worth.

I. *The ascension of our Lord is in perfect harmony with the other portions of His history known to us : Supernatural.*

II. *The conduct of our Lord at the time of His ascension harmonizes with all that is written of Him before that time.* "While He blessed them." That was His work. He was like Himself to the end. Nothing had changed or embittered Him.

III. *The Ascension is connected with the carrying out of His own work.*—Ephesians iv. 8—13. He ascended that He might fill the whole world with His influence. He has left behind Him the spirit of His life. He has shed forth the power of the Holy Ghost.

IV. *The Ascension inspired the noblest feelings in the hearts of the Apostles* (v. 52). Worship, *i.e.*, reverence, admiration, transcendent wonder. Religion more than knowledge, faith, awe, hope. How many of us content to live without the enthusiasm of love?

V. *The ascension of Christ teaches that virtuous sufferings lead to and end in glory.* The end of His suffering the beginning of His glory. Shall it not be so with His saints? Death an ascent into glorious life, rather than a descent into the grave.—  
2 TIMOTHY ii. 11, 12. *The late Rev. Thomas Jones.*

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## IV.—SUNDAY AFTER ASCENSION.

## THE PROMISE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

“And He said unto them, It is not for you to know the times and seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power. But ye shall receive powers after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you : and ye shall be witnesses unto Me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth.”—ACTS i. 7, 8.

*Introduction.* Fitting that on Sunday before Whitsuntide we should meditate upon the promise of which Pentecost was the fulfilment. Verse 3 says that Jesus “showed Himself alive, after His passion, by many infallible proofs.” May be said also that “by many infallible proofs” He *established His identity* with His former self—*e.g.*, one distinctive mark of His former dealings with men had been His repression of the spirit of curiosity, and the practical answers He had returned to speculative questions. See Luke xiii. 23, 24, and John xxi. 21, 22. It is the same tongue that speaks, and in the same tone when the risen Saviour, in reply to question, “Lord, wilt Thou at this time ?” etc. (v. 6), utters the words of our text.

I. *Compare the knowledge withheld with the power promised.* “Not for you to know times or seasons” (Deut. xxix. 29). But though this is denied you, more precious privileges await you :—

(a) Reception of power from on high.

(b) Honour of bearing witness unto Me among men. Folly of spending time and energy in the endeavour “some secret thing to know.” The true wisdom is to be “wise unto salvation,” and then wise to “win souls.” “Covet earnestly the best gifts.”

II. Our Lord’s words teach us that *spiritual power must be of spiritual origin*. “Ye shall receive power *after that* the Holy Ghost is come upon you. Learn then—

1. Not to undertake spiritual work in your own strength.

2. After every victory won to let your language be, “Not unto us,” etc. (Psalm cxvi. 1).

This power we may have in answer to prayer (Luke xi. 13).

III. *The fulfilment of this promise and the reality of this power are proved by—*

1. The boldness and constancy of the apostolic testimony in the teeth of all opposition (Acts iv. 13, 19, 20, 29).

2. The conquests which, contrary to all human likelihood, Christianity won in the days of the Apostles, and has continued since to achieve (1 Cor. i. 23—29).

IV. *Those only can be witnesses FOR, who have been witnesses OF,* the things of which they testify. As eye-witnesses of the resurrection the apostles can have no successors. See Acts i. 21, 22.

But spiritual facts are as real as historical. And every Christian man can say of his testimony (John iii. 11, and John i. 3).

V. *Note the order which the apostolic witness-bearing was to observe.* It was to begin at Jerusalem, because—

(a) That had been the scene of the story they had to tell.

(b) The coming feast, bringing a multitude of visitors into the city, would provide opportunity for spreading the good news far and wide.

But, making Jerusalem the centre, Christ's followers were not to pause until the circumference of the circle was wide as that of the globe itself.

Hint for us as to the *method* of our Christian enterprise. Begin at home, but do not stay there.

VI. *The infinite love of Christ is mirrored in the command implied in this promise.*

1. *That love is utterly forgiving.* "In Jerusalem," though it was there that by the hands of wicked men, etc.

2. *That love breaks down the most inveterate human prejudices.* "In Samaria," though the Jews had had no dealings with the Samaritans. See this part of the injunction fulfilled, Acts viii. 5, 8.

3. *That love is a universal love.* "To the uttermost parts of the earth."

*Rev. J. R. Bailey.*

Park Church, Halifax.

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*Quarterly*, vol. iii., p. 38; "Power from on High," *Homiletic Quarterly*, vol. ii., p. 550, and vol. v., p. 170, and Dr. Punshon in *Christian World Pulpit*, vol. i., p. 73; "The Secret of Ministerial Success and Source of the Spiritual Life," J. C. Jones, *Christian World Pulpit*, vol. i., p. 504; "Witnessing to Christ," Capel Molyneux, *Christian World Pulpit*, vol. iii., p. 97; "Witnessing Power," Gervase Smith, *Christian World Pulpit*, vol. xviii., p. 161; "Times and Seasons," F. W. Brown, *Christian World Pulpit*, vol. xxii., p. 45; "Power," Eustace Conder, *Christian World Pulpit*, vol. xxiv., p. 1; "Success of Christianity and Modern Explanations of It," Lecture by Principal Cairns, *Clerical World*, vol. i., p. 333; and see Arthur's "Tongue of Fire," chap. i., and Parker's "Paraclete," p. 150.

## V. WHIT-SUNDAY.

(*From the Epistle.*)

### THE OUTPOURING OF THE SPIRIT.

"And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place," etc.—ACTS ii. 1—21.

Mark the case of the Divine Head of the Church in fixing special times for the communication of special blessings. We have here—

I. *The largest possible opportunity.* There are opportunities even in Divine Providence. The days are not all alike to God. We would bind Him down to *one* day. But does He not come in upon birthdays, wedding days, days of deliverance, times of surprise, days of unusual sorrow? He takes up one day and holds it symbolically before us. What He does with that day He wants to do with all the others.

II. *The largest memorial feast known to Israel.* Associated with memories of bondage and deliverance—of Sinai, and the giving of the law. At Pentecost *all* the sacrifices were offered.

III. *The largest possible union—*

(a) Of nationalities;

(b) Of desire. Note the word *accord*. God has promised nothing to *disunion*. They were gathered with one *accord*; that is the permanent element in their union. They were also

gathered in one *place*; that is the transient circumstance. The place is nothing (John iv. 21), the accord is everything.

IV. *The largest possible bestowment of the Divine gift.* They were ALL with one accord. The Spirit a *common* gift, bestowed not upon apostles only, but upon the humblest in the Church.

Always interesting to observe how great promises are fulfilled. The very greatness of the promise necessitates fulfilment on a scale proportioned to it. There could be no common-place realization of such a promise as Christ had given to the apostles. Nor was there. For (ii. 4) "suddenly there came a sound from heaven," etc.

Learn;

1. How *helpless* we are in the matter of *spiritual revivals*.
2. The power of waiting.
3. How unmistakable is the gift of fire.

*Joseph Parker, D.D.*

From "Apostolic Life," vol. i., p. 42.

#### REFERENCES TO OTHER SERMONS ON THE TEXT.

Sermon in continuation of the above, Parker's "Apostolic Life," vol. i., p. 52; "Pentecost," Stopford Brooke, 2nd series, p. 21; Dr. Cox, "Biblical Expositions," p. 276; David Brown, *Expositor*, 1st series, vol. i., p. 393; J. O. Dykes, *Preacher's Lantern*, vol. iv., pp. 129 and 193 (and see same in his "From Jerusalem to Antioch"); and Reed, "Pulpit Memorials," p. 193; "With One Accord," Stanford's "Homilies on Christian Work," p. 51; "Baptism of the Holy Ghost," *Homiletic Quarterly*, vol. iii., pp. 161; "First Congregation Appealed to by Inspired Apostles," *Homiletic Quarterly*, vol. iii., p. 163; "First Apostolic Appeal," *Homiletic Quarterly*, vol. iii., p. 165; "Features of the New Dispensation," *Homiletic Quarterly*, vol. iii., p. 167; ver. 12 with 37, "Two Great Questions," *Homiletic Magazine*, vol. vi., p. 279; "The Fourfold Symbols of the Spirit" (wind, water, fire, oil), Maclaren, "Year's Ministry," 2nd series, p. 99; "The Gift of the Spirit," Mark Wilks, *Christian World Pulpit*, vol. i., p. 449; "The Needed Baptism," Anon., *Christian World Pulpit*, vol. v., p. 287; "The Holy Spirit," Spurgeon, *Christian World Pulpit*, vol. xx., p. 207; "The Promise Kept," Eustace Conder, *Christian World Pulpit*, vol. xxvi., p. 241; "St. Peter

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## VI.—TRINITY SUNDAY.

### A TRINITY SUNDAY SERMON.

"For through Him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father."  
—EPH. ii. 18.

*Introduction.* Doctrine of the Trinity the description of *what we know* of God. Have no right to say of what God is, for what there may be in Deity of which we have no knowledge how can we tell? At all events, in the manifoldness of His being these three personal existences, Creator, Redeemer, Sanctifier, easily make themselves known to the human life. Our doctrine of the Trinity is the account of what we know of God. This idea borne out by the text.

(a) Paul does not profess to be here describing God, but recounting story of man's salvation, *i.e.*—he is describing only the God whom man can know.

(b) Notice the completeness with which the God of human salvation is here depicted. Every act made up of a purpose, a method, and a power. And this is human salvation analyzed in text. What is the purpose? "To the Father we all have access." What the method? "Through Christ Jesus." What the power? "By the Spirit." The salvation is one, and yet it is a three in one.

*Illustration of this truth.* Take the act of a boy's education. If you set a low ideal before him, you may give him the best teachers, and inspire him with enthusiasm, but you will turn out only a half-made man. The *end* not worthy of method and power. Or the standard you set before him may be the highest, but if you furnish him with only poor means the *method* will be



unworthy of the end and power. Or, you may make the ideal perfect, and provide the best appliances, but if you put only some low or mercenary impulse into the scholar's heart, the *power* will be unworthy of the method and end. In either case his education will be imperfect. Now, instead of a boy's education, put a man's salvation. If it be not *to the Father*, the Son's redemption is in vain. If it be not *through the Son*, the Father waits, and the Spirit moves for nought. If it be not *by the Spirit*, the Father's heart stands open, and the method of grace is perfect, but the unmoved soul stands inactive and unsaved. Scripture teaches us that end, method, power, all are perfect, and each must thus be worthy of the rest. The three are one.

I. *The end of human salvation is access to the Father.* This the first truth of our religion. The source of all the end of all. Men need to learn the Divinity of the Father, for without this they will never learn that the true end of their life is Divine. *This the Divinity of the end.*

II. *Consider the Divinity of the method.* "Through Jesus Christ." Man alienated from God. Christ's life and nature the bridge which opens the gulf. Out of which nature came the Mediator? He is both human and Divine, but from which side did the bridge spring? "God sent His Son." This the very soul of the Gospel. As the end was Divine, so the method is Divine. As it is to God that we come, so it is God Who brings us there. Analogy: A strong nation sending an embassy to win back to their allegiance a colony of rebels. Would not the embassy sent be of the country that sent it? And so the Son of God, the true, fit, only perfect messenger of God to a sinful world. It is through the Divine method that we must come to the Divine end.

III. *The Divinity of the power.* "By one Spirit." What do we mean by the Holy Spirit being the power of salvation? The soul is a live thing. The Divine power takes possession of its capacities and becomes an indwelling energy in the soul itself, setting it homeward to the Father. To return to the analogy: God is the Divine Fatherland of the human soul; Christ, like the embassy which comes out of the Fatherland to win it back from its rebellion; and the Holy Spirit is the Fatherland awakened in the rebellious colony's own soul, and seeking its own.

We believe then in the Divine power one with the Divine method and the Divine end, in God the Spirit one with the Father and the Son. This the truth of the Deity as it relates to us. Each cannot be worthy of the other unless each is perfect. But each cannot be perfect unless each is Divine; that is our faith in the Trinity—three Persons and one God.

Let us keep that faith. I do not mean "cling to an idea" merely, but let us seek to come *to* the highest, *through* the highest, *by* the highest. Let the end, and the method, and the power of our life be all Divine.

*Rev. Phillips Brooks.*

"Sermons," p. 228.

#### REFERENCES TO OTHER SERMONS, ETC., ON SAME TEXT.

"Doctrine of the Trinity," R. Winterbotham, "Sermons and Expositions," p. 331; "St. Paul on the Trinity," Bartlett, *Expositor*, 2nd series, vol. iv., p. 321; and see on the same subject, but not on the same text: Rev. iv. 1; "Trinity Sunday," Congreve's "High Hopes," p. 184; "The Blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost," Canon Holland's "Logic and Life," p. 212; 2 Cor. xiii. 14; "The Benediction," J. T. Stannard, *Christian World Pulpit*, vol. xiv., p. 260; T. M. Herbert, "Sketches of Sermons," p. 318; "The Holy Trinity," Maguire, *Christian World Pulpit*, vol. i., p. 465; and see Maurice's "Theological Essays," p. 410; Parker's "Paraclete," p. 253, and "Apostolic Life," vol. iii. p. 346.

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#### NOTICE.

The Papers on CHURCH LIFE IN BRITAIN will be resumed in the May number.

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# *I. Sermons.*



## EPISCOPACY.

BY REV. H. P. LIDDON, D.D., D.C.L.\*

“For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the Gospel.”  
—I COR. iv. 15.

HERE is a contrast which never disappears altogether from history, but which has not often been more vivid than it was at Corinth in the age of the Apostle. On the one side is a body of active-minded teachers, who within the Christian society are widely listened to and influential; and some of whom, without realizing what Christianity really is and means, evidently aspire on its behalf to meet the cultivated paganism around them on terms of something like intellectual equality. The faith of Christ had not been long enough in Corinth to have altogether forfeited its character of novelty, and they look upon it, possibly, from other points of view, but mainly as a valuable stock in trade for lectures and dissertations. They are less concerned with its abstract truth than with their own skill in manipulating it. The divisions at Corinth among Christians are interesting to them, as adding to the general mental fermentation, and as affording

\* Preached at St. Paul's, St. Mark's day, 1885, on the consecration of the Bishops of Lincoln and Exeter.

numberless opportunities for critical discussion, analysis, perhaps amusement. They are more concerned for their personal reputations than for the moral and spiritual effect upon their hearers of anything that they may say; and their reputations, no doubt, in that small Christian society of Corinth, are, in a sense, brilliant.

On the other side is the Apostle, not less alive to the intellectual aspects of Christianity than his enterprising opponents, but with a totally different and far loftier conception of its awful meaning. To him it is valuable, not as a stepping-stone to personal importance, but as a message from God to man—as a body of truth compared with which the highest philosophy of this world is foolishness. To his own interests and fame he is sufficiently indifferent; but he is passionately concerned for the well-being of those poor souls at Corinth, and for their practical loyalty to the crucified Redeemer, Who had been the one subject of his preaching among them. He is bowed down with grief and shame at the report of their divisions, which might seem to surrounding heathendom to imply a divided Christ; he thinks cheaply enough of any intellectual activity which was morally so costly. But, if the premisses of his opponents were to be granted, no doubt they had the best of it:—"Now ye are full; now ye are rich; ye have reigned as kings without us. . . . We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honourable, but we are despised" (1 Cor. iv. 8-10). It is the contrast between a business and a vocation, between the merely academical and the pastoral, between the professor and the apostle, between a religion in theory and a religion of practice, between the intellectual world in its solitary barrenness and the intellectual world illuminated by the moral, between that

which only interests and occupies the mind, and that which rouses and quickens the conscience and invigorates the will and changes and purifies the life.

But there was one further point in the contrast which has yet to be mentioned. The Corinthians might have—he did not know how many—lecturers in Christianity at work among them, sufficiently versatile, clever, witty, even amusing; but only one person could claim to stand towards them in the sacred and tender relation of a spiritual father. For to his toil and prayer alone, under God, did they owe their conversion; and his authority had a claim on them such as that of no other could possibly rival. “Though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the Gospel.”

I.

It would seem that when the Apostle looked around him for a metaphor which should describe his relations towards his flock, he could find nothing in life or nature which so nearly satisfied him as that of a father. It is not the only metaphor he uses to describe his apostolic office. When spreading the Gospel he is a husbandman who plants while another waters; when struggling with sin or error he is a soldier in the uniform of Jesus Christ; when entreating men to accept God's promises of mercy in Christ, he is an ambassador furnished with Divine credentials. But the figure on which his profoundly sympathetic nature loves to dwell as best expressing his permanent relation to those whom he had won to the faith of Christ is that which we are considering.

There is nothing in nature which so resembles God as a human father; for the strength, the majesty, the

tenderness, above all, the authority of the universal Father, rests, in a measure, on each of His earthly representatives. This was instinctively felt by heathens who, when anxious to salute a civil ruler by a title that should invest him with associations such as might take captive the hearts of his subjects, have called him *pater patriæ*, the father of his country. This is the secret of the indefinable dignity that mantles over that great patriarch whose position is so unique in the history of the East and in the history of revelation; as the father of many nations and the father of the faithful. The greater clearness and prominence which the Gospel had given to the fatherly character of God, had enriched the word and the idea with a wealth of authority and affection that men had not before associated with it. Accordingly, when recommending Timothy to the respectful sympathy of the Philippians, St. Paul says that "as a son with the father he hath served with me in the Gospel." \* When reminding the Thessalonians of those evangelizing labours of his which had resulted in their conversion, "Ye know," he says, "how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children, that ye would walk worthy of God, Who hath called you unto His kingdom and glory." † Once, indeed, he recognises in a presbyter this character of spiritual fatherhood. ‡ But, as a rule, he reserves this figure to describe his own office: "Though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the Gospel."

## II.

When we say that bishops are successors of the apostles we are not formulating a theory, but stating a

\* Phil. ii. 22.    † 1 Thess. ii. 11, 12.    ‡ 1 Tim. v. 1.



fact of history. In one sense, indeed, every presbyter succeeds the apostles ; like them, he ministers the Word and Sacraments of Christ. In another the apostles have no successors ; they alone were privileged to found the Church of Christ, and while founding it to wield a world-wide jurisdiction. But substantially, and in a sense all its own, bishops do, in the phrase of St. Cyprian *apostolis vicariâ ordinatione succedunt*. If they do not singly share in the world-wide jurisdiction which belonged to the apostles, and which could only now be wielded by the universal episcopate acting together, they do in all other respects reproduce from age to age among men the fulness of the apostolic authority.

There are in the last analysis two, and only two, coherent theories of the origin and character of the Christian ministry. Of these one makes the minister the elected delegate of the congregation ; in teaching and ministering he exerts an authority which he derives from his flock. The other traces ministerial authority to the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who deposited it in its fulness in the college of the apostles. "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth ; go ye therefore, and make disciples of all nations."\* "As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you."† The apostles, thus invested with the plenitude of ministerial power, detached from themselves, in the form of distinct grades or orders of ministry, so much as was needed, at successive epochs, for the building and supporting the Church. First, they created an order specially charged with the care of the poor and with the administration of Church funds, although also, as we know from the Acts as well as the pastoral epistles, empowered to preach, and to administer

\* Matt. xxviii. 18, 19.

† John xx. 21.

the sacrament of baptism. Next they bestowed on the Church a larger separate instalment of ministerial power—that of the presbyters or bishops—as in those first days the second order was called by turns ; an order which had all ministerial capacity committed to it, with the exception of that of transmitting the ministry. Lastly, as St. Clement of Rome tells us, in order to avoid controversy, the apostles ordained certain men to the end that when they themselves had fallen asleep in death, others of approved character might succeed to their special office (*διαδέχονται τὴν λειτουργίαν αὐτῶν*).† Such were Timothy and Titus, not yet exclusively called bishops, but certainly bishops in the sense of the sub-apostolic and of our own age—men who, in addition to the fulness of ministerial capacity, had also the power of transmitting it. In Crete, Titus receives explicit authority from St. Paul to ordain presbyters ; at Ephesus, Timothy has various directions from St. Paul respecting the way in which charges against presbyters are to be received. Thus we see in Timothy and Titus the exercise of what is distinctive both in episcopal orders and episcopal jurisdiction ; and unless the pastoral epistles are not of apostolic origin, the three orders existed in their completeness under the eyes of St. Paul. Within the compass of the New Testament there are two other facts which point to the establishment of the episcopate in apostolic times. One is the position of St. James the Less at Jerusalem ; he seems to have been an Apostle who already occupied the more localised and restricted position of a bishop. This appears in the place assigned to him at the Council of Jerusalem, and in the formal visit which St. Paul paid him at a later period, but especially in the unanimous testimony of the next age, which spoke of him

\* *Ep. ad Cor.*, i., 44.

as Bishop of Jerusalem. The other fact is the representation of the angels of the Seven Churches in the Apocalypse. What were these angels? Guardian spirits of the churches they cannot have been, since some of them were guilty of grave faults. Nor can they have been the churches themselves, since St. John distinguishes the angels and the churches as having the distinct symbols of stars and candlesticks. Each angel represents a church for the faith and practice of which he is responsible; and it would be difficult to express more exactly the position of a primitive bishop.

The origin and claims of the episcopate is a district of theology which English divines have made peculiarly their own. The anti-episcopal Puritanism of Elizabeth's reign, represented by Cartwright, provoked Bishop Bilson's great work on the "Perpetual Government of Christ's Church," and the seventh book of Hooker's "Ecclesiastical Polity." The more trenchant Puritanism of the next age led to the cultivation of the studies which issued in writings so truly classical as Pearson's "*Vindiciæ*," and Beveridge's "*Annotations on the Apostolical Canons*,"—not to mention the often admirable, but less accurate "*Antiquities*" of Bingham.

But the greater English divines have also felt that when insisting upon the episcopate as organically necessary to the structure of the visible body of Christ, as necessary not merely to its *bene esse*, but to its *esse*, they were indirectly raising a solid barrier against ultramontanism. Nothing is more remarkable in this connection than certain debates, both in the second and third meetings of the Council of Trent; the papal representatives, especially when discussing the question whether a bishop's residence in his diocese was of divine obligation, or could

be dispensed with by the pope, minimised the authority and rights of the episcopate down to the very verge of presbyterianism ; indeed, it may be doubted whether any presbyterian divine could well outdo the Jesuit Lainez in the skill with which, in a sermon historically famous, he endeavoured to reduce the episcopal rights and jurisdiction to a shadowy impotence, that would make the way clear for the most exaggerated assertions of papal supremacy.

In our own days the question of episcopacy is increasingly felt to be bound up with that of the apostolic origin and authority of the pastoral epistles. The critics who, from Schleiermacher down to Baur and Pfleiderer and others, have partly or wholly denied the apostolic authority of these epistles, have insisted with great force and justice upon what they call their hierarchical characteristics, and then they have proceeded to beg a very large question indeed by arguing that these characteristics prove the epistles to be of post-apostolic origin. And it is significant that the ablest and the most destructive of recent English treatises on the early organisation of the Christian Church omits all reference to these particular books of the New Testament, which surely, whatever their worth and character, most directly bear on it.

It is, indeed, a very solemn question whether we hold the episcopate to be a part of the revealed will of God, or, like archdeacons or capitular bodies, only a feature of Church government, who, however venerable, may conceivably be dispensed with, without sacrificing anything organic in the conditions of our communion with Christ. If, by suppressing all the deans and chapters, we could reconcile all the separated Protestant bodies to the unity and doctrine of the Church, who of us would but gladly

make the sacrifice? The historian Ranke has drawn attention to the barrier which is raised by the episcopate between the English Church and the Lutheran and Reformed communities on the Continent; and while the maintenance of such a barrier is more than intelligible if we believe that upon a true episcopal succession the validity of our chief means of communion with our Lord depends, it is hardly, I will not say intelligible, but even defensible—especially when we consider the present pressure of infidelity upon all reformed Christendom—if in our hearts we believe the episcopate to be only an archæological treasure, or, as the phrase goes, a very venerable form of Church government.

### III.

But it is time that we should return to the lessons which the Apostle would teach us by his phrase “a father in Christ.” The first and great characteristic of the earthly father is that, under God, he transmits the gift of physical life. This is his prerogative distinction; it most nearly likens him to the Father of heaven; it raises him above any other natural relationship between man and man.

The bishop, too, is a father in this sense; that he alone can transmit ministerial power to others. “Whereas,” says Hooker, “presbyters by such power as they have received for administration of the sacraments are able only to beget children unto God, bishops, having power to ordain, do by virtue thereof create fathers to the people of God.”\* “The apostles, being bishops at large, ordained everywhere presbyters.”† “Titus and Timothy having received episcopal power, as apostolic ambassadors or legates, the one in Greece the other in Ephesus, they both

\* E. P. vii., 6, 2.

† *Ibid.*

did by virtue thereof likewise ordain, throughout all churches, deacons and presbyters, within the circuits allotted unto them."\*

But was this prerogative shared by presbyters? The admission of presbyters to lay their hands on the ordained conjointly with the ordaining bishop, as implied in the pastoral epistles, and explicitly recognised by the fourth Council of Carthage,† and in our own ordinal, does not prove it, any more than the promise to the apostles that they should judge the twelve tribes of Israel confers on them the office of the one universal Judge. The presbyters who assist in laying on hands give token of moral sympathy and approbation to the act of the chief pastor; but their presence adds nothing to, as their absence would subtract nothing from, the validity of the rite. Not that the power of ordination exhausts the creative functions, so to call them, of a bishop. He is, by his office, not merely the *caput*, but the *radix ecclesiæ*, the source and origin of all the activities for good within his diocese. He perpetuates, from age to age, the work of the missionary bishop in whose chair he sits, and from him every effort for good within the scope of his jurisdiction should receive, if not its original impulse, at least its ready encouragement and consecration. He is by the terms of his office the originating, and creating, and impelling, as well as, or rather than, the controlling force in his diocese; it was, perhaps, his keen realisation of this aspect of his ministry which made the episcopate of Bishop Wilberforce so fruitful in its results both to his diocese and to the Church at large.

Out of the father's relation to his children, as the earthly author of their life, arises a natural authority which has three distinct departments for its exercise.

\* E. P. vii., 6, 2.

† Conc. Carth., iv., 3., c. 1.



The father is the natural teacher of his children ; their intelligence opens under the rays of his instruction ; he is the highest wisdom of which they have any experience, and he brings truth home to them by the voice of love. If he cannot himself teach his children, he not only has the right but is under the obligation of choosing a substitute ; a master who shall stand in his place, and administer that which it is beyond his power to supply. The bishop, too, as the father of his diocese, is the one teacher within its limits. In the eye of the Church all the clergy are his substitutes ; he can, by the law of the Church, whenever he wills, take their place. This is his *ius magisterii*. Holding, as he does, in his mind and conscience the deposit of the true faith, it is his first duty to see that it is taught to his flock, that it is taught in its integrity, that it is defended when assailed, that it is reasserted in its purity when corrupted or disfigured. For he is not the versatile exponent of a human theory, but the keeper and teacher of a revelation from God. He can neither reject an old doctrine nor welcome a new one ; he can only decide whether a given doctrine which falls in his way is conformable or contrary to the truth which he holds and teaches, and which his spiritual children may expect at his hands. His intellectual outlook will indeed be wide ; he will keep his eye, as far as may be, on all the surging currents of thought, along which souls are carried hither and thither in our distracted modern world ; as he will welcome from any quarter any ray of truth, so he will pay no feeble compliments to any shade of error. Before all things he will be jealous for the honour of our Lord—His eternal Godhead, His incarnation in time, His infallibility as a teacher, the atoning power of His death, the literal truth of His resurrection and ascension and perpetual interces-

sion, the converting and sanctifying influence of His Spirit, the life-giving and life-sustaining power which He exerts through His sacraments, the endlessness, for weal and woe, of the life which He has revealed beyond the grave. But an apostle must trace a bishop's duties in this department. "Take heed unto thyself and to the doctrine." "Hold fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus." "That good thing which was committed unto thee, keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us." "The things which thou hast heard of me, among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also."

Not only does a father teach ; he governs. Like every society, a family must have a government ; and the modern theory of a government of all by all is not well calculated, at least in a family, to ensure general well-being. And as children lack the requisite experience, and a mother the requisite force, the natural and undisputed ruler is the father.

As the father of his diocese, the bishop is its ruler. His right to rule is derived, not from a body of electors who have made him, for their common good, a chief magistrate, but from the character which he inherits from the apostles of Christ. Timothy and Titus are addressed as rulers of churches ; they are to look after the conduct and bearing of their clergy, and in particulars which are specified in detail. They are to see that presbyters who labour in the word and doctrine are counted worthy of double honour. But their rule extends to all descriptions of persons within the churches over which they have jurisdiction. Timothy is to superintend, according to rules delivered by the Apostle, the ecclesiastical order of

widows ; Timothy and Titus are to have especial regard to the condition of the numerous Christian slaves ; Titus is to look after whole classes of Cretans separately, the young and the old of both sexes.

The bishop rules, not only the outward circumstances and departments, but also the inner life of his flock ; he has, within limits, the *ius liturgicum*, the right and duty of providing that prayers, supplications, intercessions, and eucharists should be made for all men, and especially for all in authority.\* Everything liturgical, according to primitive church law, save the matter and form of the sacraments and the language of the Catholic Creeds, is subject to his discretion. In latter ages, as we know, this discretion has been limited almost to the point of annihilation by Congregations of Rites, and by Acts of Uniformity ; it may be well, on an occasion like the present, to recall the sense of early Christendom.

But government is impossible in any society without the sanction of punishment. If rules are to be made their violations must be punished ; if command is to be a reality, there must be a means of enforcing obedience. The best father who governs but cannot punish would soon discover that the sceptre of his authority was already falling from his feeble hands.

Nor is the episcopate able to discharge its true duties unless the bishop can enforce obedience to the faith and discipline of the Church, unless he have some kind of coercive jurisdiction. Already in the First Epistle to Timothy, Timothy is addressed as if he were the *index ordinarius* of a later age. "Against a presbyter receive not an accusation but before two or three witnesses. Them that sin rebuke before all, that others may fear.

\* 1 Tim ii 1, 2.

I charge thee before God and the Lord Jesus Christ and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality." In the same sense "Hymenæus and Alexander are pointed out to Timothy as having made shipwreck of the faith, and as having been delivered to Satan," \* and to Titus the order runs :—"A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject." †

The fatherly character of the bishop is sometimes traversed by the accidents of age or attainments. He may find among his clergy men who are older, or more generally accomplished, or better divines, or of higher spiritual experience than himself. Of these the best will always echo St. Jerome's exclamation to St. Augustine—"Amice carissime; ætate fili, dignitate parens." They will remember that a bishop's fatherly character has nothing to do with personal characteristics; that it belongs to an office which comes from Christ.

A like result may follow on the relations of the Church to the civil law. We cannot, indeed, be too grateful to the law for the position which it secures to the clergy by making every benefice a freehold; yet a freehold may be converted into a fortified castle, from within whose walls a rebellious son sets at nought the counsels of a spiritual father. But that which of late years has most frequently veiled from the eyes of their clergy the kindly face and hand of a father in Christ is the unhappy fact that in the last resort the most sacred questions of doctrine and morals are, under the form of interpreting documents which have a legal aspect, decided—not by the commissioned guardians of the faith, but—by accomplished lawyers, who may or may not be Christians. This fatal weakness in our

\* 1 Tim. i. 20.

† Titus iii. 10.

Church polity was aggravated by the provisions of the Public Worship Regulation Act ; and we can only defend existing arrangements if we can suppose that St. Paul would have allowed the questions pending between himself and the Galatian Judaisers, or the Corinthian deniers of the Resurrection, to be settled by the nearest proconsul. Only those who wish ill to the English Church can desire to perpetuate a state of things which is not necessary to the union of Church and State, and which, among the many mischiefs which it entails, does more than anything else to damage, in the eyes of faithful clergy, the fatherly character of the episcopate.

But a father does not insist upon his rights excepting in the last resort ; he takes them for granted ; he recommends them to his children by the love which makes authority more than welcome. When the machinery of Church government, especially in penal aspects, is rudely exposed to view, it is plain that there has been a fatal breakdown somewhere.

So delicate a relationship as that of a father in God depends for its working efficacy, not on the amount of authority which can be insisted on, on one side, or of submission which can be enforced or extorted from the other, but on moral influences ; on the respect which is inspired by high and disinterested character, on the attraction which is exerted by a true love of God and man. Like the most beautiful things in the moral world, this authority is of tender growth, and it is easily impaired or forfeited. A scornful or impatient word, scarcely intended by the irritated, and, perhaps, over-worked speaker, will rankle for years in the mind of a young curate, and colour his whole conception of the relation in which he stood to the fathers of the Church.

It is difficult to say how much is lost to the moral force of the Church and to the character of her ministers when a bishop is thought and spoken of as a good man of business, or a man who might have been a judge, or a very accurate scholar, or even a well-read divine, if besides and beyond all these he is not recognised as the father of his flock, both lay and clerical ; the one man to whom men instinctively turn for advice and counsel in moments of moral or mental perplexity ; the man on whose wide knowledge and kindly temper and simple disinterestedness of purpose they know that they can depend for trustworthy guidance ; and of whom they think habitually as one whose blessing would be dearly prized as a message of encouragement from another world in the dark hours when its shadows are already falling thick across the path of life.

#### IV.

Of public institutions in modern Europe the episcopate is in years the most venerable. It is older than any secular throne ; it is by some centuries older than the papacy. It had reached its prime while the empire was still standing ; it could shed its blood with Cyprian ; it could illuminate the world by the consecrated genius of an Irenæus, of an Augustine, of Chrysostom and Basil, and it seemed to undergo a weird transformation at the hands of feudalism ; we think of the bishops clad in mail armour who fought at Senlac or in the wars of Stephen, or of the later prelates whose brasses in older cathedrals represent them as blessing us in cope and mitre out of their battle-memented castles. Of the sixteen sculptured compartments which record the events of the episcopate of Guido Torlati at Arezzo, only the first, in which he takes possession of his see, and the last, when he lies upon his deathbed, exhibit



him in any pastoral character or have any relation to his work as a father in Christ. After the soldier bishops come the great statesmen ; it requires an effort to recollect the true characters of Wolsey and Richelieu, or of certain of those prince-electors who so largely swayed the fortunes of Germany. Then appeared the literary bishops ; men often greater in profane than in sacred letters ; and now, as in many other ways so in this, we are apparently re-entering upon the earliest conditions of the Church's life. Only the intervening periods were not, as we may too hastily think, periods during which the real objects of the episcopate were wholly lost sight of ; the soldiers, the diplomatists, the men of general literature were always a small minority of their order, which, as a whole, quietly and unostentatiously pursued its course of ruling churches and guiding souls. It is welcome to recall such language as that of the sixth Council of Arles,\* used at a time when the bishops of France were largely feudatories under Charlemagne. "Let the bishops bear in mind," says the 17th canon, that they are "entrusted with the care of the people and of the poor, as their guardians and protectors. If, then, they see the unfortunate oppressed by the powerful and the highly placed, let them charitably remonstrate ; and, if their advice is disregarded, let them carry their complaints to the sovereign, that he may correct by his supreme authority those who would pay no regard to the advice of their pastor." And as for Wolsey let us recall the days, not when, as the most powerful statesman in Europe, he was wont to appear in state in this cathedral, and, indeed, proudly held the balance between France and the empire, but when a discredited and broken man he retired from the court of the sensual Tudor to his northern diocese, there

\* Conc. Ar., vi., car. 17, a, 813.

to win almost at once the hearts of the clergy and the poor by his pastoral care and tenderness. The episcopate as it traverses the centuries is like a weather-beaten barque on whose hull clusters many a shell and weed that tells of the seas of feudal or political life behind it ; but as these encrustations fall away we discover that the essential feature of a spiritual fatherhood, which was always there, remains intact. The title, father in God, has never disappeared from the language, whether of the Church, or of the law, or of general literature ; and the reality even in the worst times, has never been without a witness. The century which beheld Hoadley on the English bench was also a century in which men knelt down in the streets of London to ask for the blessing of Bishop Wilson.

Certainly we meet to-day on an occasion when we may insist on this characteristic of the highest order in the sacred ministry with more than usual hope and confidence. The eminent scholar and poet, not less saintly in his life than remarkable for his acquirements, who has lately left us, is to be succeeded in the see of St. Hugh by one whose nomination has thrilled the hearts of his brother churchmen with the deepest thankfulness and joy. Never within our time has the great grace of sympathy, controlled and directed by a clear sense of the nature and sacredness of revealed truth, achieved so much among so many young men as has been achieved, first at the Theological College of Cuddesdon, and then from the Pastoral Chair at Oxford, in the case of my dear and honoured friend. He is surrounded at this solemn moment by hundreds who know and feel that to his care and patience, to his skill and courage, to his faith and spiritual insight, they owe all that is most precious in life, and most certain to uphold them in the hour of death ; and their sympathies and prayers are

shared by far greater numbers, who are absent from us in body, but present with us in spirit. Certainly, if past experience is any guarantee of what is to come, if there be such a thing as continuity of spiritual character and purpose, then we may hope to witness an episcopate, which *κατὰ τὰς προαγούσας προφητείας*\*—if current anticipations are not wholly at fault—will rank hereafter with those which in point of moral beauty stand highest on the roll of the later English Church—with Andrews, with Kenn, with Wilson, with Hamilton.

And, if I may not presume to speak from such personal knowledge of the successor of our own bishop in the great see of the West, it is at least allowable to dwell on the hopes which gather round an honoured name, and on the wide reputation for devotion and spiritual experience which has been gained by a long and fruitful ministry in this metropolis. He, too, will carry with him into his new field of labour the prayers and sympathies of grateful friends, known and unknown, who earnestly desire that he may long rule and feed his flock in the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ.

Men say that hard times are coming upon the English Church; and outside her walls voices, like those of the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem, may sometimes be heard crying, "Down with her; down with her even to the ground!" And, in truth, already she has lost much which was of no mean value for our Master's service. The Education Act of 1870 has largely withdrawn the people from her schools; and recent legislation has swept away all but a rapidly diminishing fragment of her old position at the Universities. With largely secularised populations, with our higher class increasingly trained by

\* 1 Tim. i. 18.

infidel teachers, and with our vastly extended franchise, it is impossible not to anticipate for the Church in no distant future sterner experiences than have befallen her since the middle of the seventeenth century. But the prospect is by no means an entirely dark one ; and among its brighter features is the wealth of generous devotion which young men and women, in increasing numbers, and in various conditions in society, are freely offering almost day by day to the sacred cause of our Lord and Saviour. It is as though the anxieties of a loved and aged parent could open and melt hearts which were closed against her in days of more assured prosperity ; and surely no token of God's present favour could inspire more courage for dealing with the problems that may be in store for her sons. To all who are thus, in their opening life, giving their best to God, the event of this day will be full of encouragement and hope ; for it is the consecration to the highest duties in the Church of sympathies which, next to His own supernatural grace, have drawn them, most persuasively, to the feet of the Redeemer ; it is an assurance that they will find on apostolic thrones that union of tenderness and wisdom which recalls while it transcends all that is most revered and loved in an earthly home.

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### THE ANCHOR OF HOPE.

BY THE REV. DONALD FRASER, D.D.\*

"Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath.

Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil."—HEB. vi. 17, 19.

ONE of the saddest things that was ever said about the heathen world is said by the Apostle Paul, who wrote of

\* A sermon preached at Trinity Presbyterian Church, Manchester, on Sunday evening, April 12th, 1885.

it "having no hope." The agnostic literature of our own period is doing what it can to drag Christendom back, and drag it down to the same dismal abyss. There is, we are told, no sufficient evidence of any individual, conscious life beyond death; and after all we are only a more intelligent variety of the beasts that perish. The days of our life are threescore years and ten; or even, with proper care, fourscore years; so long these animal tissues may last and endure the wear and tear of living. There is no *eternal* life; the thing is impossible!

And so a grim, hard unbelief seeks to bound our little life for us, and there is no hereafter. There is no hope. Do you like the prospect? *I* do not believe it; there *is* an hereafter, and there *is* a hope. We are begotten again, by a lively hope, to the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and not to a life in poverty and uncertainty, but "an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away."

There are natural presumptions in favour of immortality, but on these I do not think it would be worth my while in this place to dilate. I stand here on Christian ground, and I say that we have a foundation which is strong enough for us, in a Divine promise, the foundation of the word of God, Who is, and Who cannot lie,—a hope of eternal life.

We have a hope of Christ's reigning, and of our gathering together unto Him. We have the hope and the heirship of all things with Christ; it is the hope of glory; and we who believe in the Lord Jesus not only have the hope, but have the right, to a fulness, or what our Scripture calls "an assurance of hope unto the end." That word "assurance" means certainty, as opposed to uncertainty, meagreness, and shallowness; "the full assurance of hope

unto the end, that ye be not slothful, but followers of them who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises."

The blessed hope which we entertain is described in this passage and illustrated. First, it is described, and in a threefold manner. First, it is the "hope set before us"; second, the hope "sure and steadfast"; third, hope "that enters within the veil."

First, the "hope set before us." That is a form of expression that you find again and again in this epistle. In the twelfth chapter you are to "run the race set before you." And Jesus Christ "endured the cross because of the joy set before Him." That is to say, neither your hope, nor the race which you have to run, nor Christ's own joy, are uncertain; they have all been devised, and planned, and provided for by the God of our love.

And thus the hope which is our present topic, is not at all what a man may imagine, or what one may wish strongly for in his own heart; it is what God provides, and what God warrants as our hope in the word of promise which He has put into the form of a covenant, and which He has "confirmed by an oath." Then this is "set before you"; for whom? For whom does it say the hope is "set before us," and within the reach of us? Of those who "flee for refuge, to lay hold upon the hope set before them." Self-confident persons may be very sanguine in their expectation of heaven. It is no sign at all that a man is going to heaven that he is sure about it, and sings about it—no evidence at all! There are self-confident persons who are very easily made sure that they are going to heaven. That is not a "blessed hope." I tell you it is not set before self-confident persons; it is set before persons who are fugitives, self-condemned persons, who seek the Lord's mercy and take refuge therein. The



Lord takes pleasure in those who fear Him, and in those who trust in His mercy. That is the first thing in the Scripture.

And the second is, it is a "hope sure and steadfast." How so? What makes you so sure? Because it rests on the promise of God, Who cannot lie, and it is the desire of our Father in heaven, that His children in the world should have, amidst the cares and afflictions of the present, a strong consolation. They need it, they need it, in the face of the frequent defeats of natural earthly hopes, and the frequent discouragements of their personal experience and service. They need it because they are sorely disappointed; and I will tell you who most disappoints a Christian. Who disappoints you most that are a Christian, and what? With whom are you most vexed and disappointed? I will tell you. Yourself; if you are a wise man at all. Always take a man to be a fool who is vexed with everybody but himself. The wise man is more vexed with himself than with twenty other people; because he knows himself best, and he knows how miserably he comes short of his high calling, and even of his own ideal.

And in the midst of so many vexations and so many disappointments the child of God needs a strong consolation. The sorrows and disappointments of the present ought to make the eternal hope not only more precious, but the more clear to the mind; just as you may see some things more clearly when there is a little cloud in the sky than you can when there is clear sunshine. You may see the refuge more distinctly when there is a shadow in the sky than when you try to make it out under a strong unshaded glare.

And the third point is this: the hope is one that

"enters within the veil." Many people read this wrong; they think it is the *anchor* that enters within the veil. You might make all sorts of explanations of this. The writer of the epistle is not guilty of such an absurd confusion of metaphors. The *hope* goes within the veil, and is like to an anchor that goes into the sea—its proper place; it enters into that within the veil, and, because it enters there, it is not affected by the chances and changes of this present life. Its security is in heaven, where Christian believers have and hold all their best things; they only keep their second-rate things upon earth; they keep their best things there. Their treasure lies up there; their hearts' strongest affections are fixed there; their Saviour and their Friend is there; and very often they have more friends of their own there than they have here. The best things are at the right hand of God.

This is the Epistle to the Hebrews, so we need not be perplexed at this expression "within the veil." The writer never loses sight, through all his discourses, of the priesthood and the sanctuary. He describes heaven itself as the holiest of all, "the holiest within the veil," "where our Forerunner is gone." The hope is "entered within the veil"; and the "Forerunner is entered into heaven." The same word. Not gone in for a brief space of service, as the Jewish high-priest entered into the innermost place of the tabernacle or the temple, before the ark, but our Forerunner is entered in, having obtained eternal redemption for us, and is entitled to have continual intercession for us,—the abiding presence of God. That is where our hope is; our hope is in Him, or as it is elsewhere said, "He is our hope." To say that "our hope is entered in" is the same thing as to say "our Christ is entered in." Nothing that can happen to us in this world

can shake that hope of ours in heaven. Nothing that can befall us here can enter "into that within the veil." Nothing can twine itself about the person, or injure the life of the great high-priest. So we hope in Him, we think of Him, and we wait ; that is our hope. We wait to see Him. We wait for the coming forth, as we know when the people stand in the courts to see the high-priest come out, so is the whole Church now standing in the courts waiting until the High-Priest shall come forth, and take us all with Him into the glorious presence of God.

So far the hope is described. Now the hope is illustrated. This hope is as an anchor of the soul. A most apposite and instructive metaphor ; one that has struck people in all ages, and was not unknown to the heathen authors, both Greek and Roman. The anchor was taken, as you know, from very ancient times as the emblem of Hope. The idea is, of course, that of the steadiness and security given by the hope that goes down beneath the surface troubles of life, and grapples with some secret ground of strength and comfort.

Fancy a ship going to sea without any anchor at all ! Did you ever hear of such a thing ? It would be the height of folly to take a ship without an anchor to sea. Fancy it ! Spars and sails enough for use at sea, but nothing by which the vessel can near the coast. You smile at the absurd idea. There are many such absurd things, perhaps amongst ourselves. For that case of a ship going to sea without an anchor is the case of a man—perhaps he is here—who has impulse enough and energy enough to put out the sail. Impulse enough, energy enough, but no hold on the promise of God ; no good hope through grace.

Fancy, again, a ship furnished with unsound anchors and chains. That is worse than having none. That is so great a danger that no honest shipowner will spare pains or money to secure well-proved chains and anchors fit to bear the heavy strain. Wherever he economises on the ship that is not the point where he may practise economy. It does not matter much while the ship flies before the wind, and the anchor hangs idle at the bow, if it was only a piece of painted wood, so long as it is not wanted; but when she nears the land, and there is a risk of being cast ashore, everything may depend upon the soundness of the cable and the anchor, and a flaw there may involve a fatal shipwreck. Such is the case of the man who goes through life, and has, perhaps, a little profession, but only a faint hope within his breast, an unsound anchor. That is to say, a man who is possessed by a self-complacent spirit has never got to support himself, nor to take hold, through the faith of the Gospel, of a warranted hope in God through Christ Jesus. A ship well found has good anchors, and can trust to them when she is in the anchor-age ground.

In other words, a well-taught, well-disciplined Christian has good hope, and is thereby secure against going on the shoals of doubt, or the hard rocks of despair. I have read to you what St. Paul says: "We are saved by hope." Even in mild weather and a calm sea the ship must lie at anchor on the coast. Though the winds may be at rest, nor so much as a ripple on the sea in the roadstead, there are under currents playing on the keel; and there is the fall of the tide, which might soon cast the vessel on a dangerous shore.

Every one knows how the tide turns a ship at anchor, when the current flows past her; but a ship that drifts

without an anchor makes no resistance, and goes quietly to her fate. In such a case is that man who is afloat on the sea of this present life. Hastening, as people call it, "to eternity," though he is in eternity all the time, time is only a point in the middle of eternity's endless line; hastening, then, to his future, without faith, without hope in God. He sees no danger. I will tell you why. Because he is going where it is! A man never sees the danger until he begins to resist. There are currents of all kinds of evil things; there are tides of ungodly feeling and custom that are bearing a man to his fatal destiny. He is not aware of these, because he yields to them, because he drifts with them. Let down the anchor, and you will soon see where the danger lies. Let down the anchor of godly hope to the things that are unseen, and then you will discover very clearly how strong is the influence of the things which are seen; of the love of the world and the pleasures of sin which you are bound now, for your soul's safety, absolutely to resist. Indeed, for many characters, calm is more dangerous than storm. Temptation is all the more likely to prevail when he is leisurely resting, or tired. But when the storm rises, the safety of the ship, with all the lives of poor men, may depend on the strength and toughness of the cable and anchor.

I think I see one,—not in imagination so much as in memory of a passage at sea in early days,—a ship driven by tempests, unable to weather the rocky headlands and to gain the open sea. She labours heavily, and threatens to go on shore. The master knows the coast is sheltered hard by, and he gives up the attempt to wear the ship and to clear the cape, and steers quickly, but cautiously, into the very bay. With a quick turn of the helm he runs under the lee of a small island, where he remembers there

is an anchorage. There is but a moment before we reach it, and the instant the shelter is reached the cable is clear, every stitch of canvas is furled ; the cry is " Let go ! " and with a roar and a rattle the chain runs out, the anchor plunges, and there is a moment or two of intense anxiety. " Will the anchor hold ground or not ? " Will the cable bear the awful strain or not ? What a horror if the anchor should now drag, or the chain should snap ! What a joy ! The anchor answers its purpose, the ship rides on ; yes ! she rides well at anchor ; tossing safely on the surface of the sea, because she has all her security in the calm depths below.

Such is the state of the man, my friends, that I was speaking of. When life is troubled or conscience agitated, the heart is tossed with tempests and conflict, and you exclaim, " I am afraid I cannot fight it out ! " There are times when this comes to us. You cannot fight it out ; you cannot clear the cape ; just as the ship could not round the point or keep the open sea. What is a man to do ? Is he to let his soul be overwhelmed, drowned, broken in despair ? Let him drop the anchor, and at the right place. Let him hope in God. Let him take hold of the offer of the Gospel, and the exceeding great and precious promises that are contained in it to those who believe the Gospel. And let him remember that the waves which make so great a noise are only things of the surface after all. There are calm depths below the tumult. There is good anchorage ground for Christian hope and consolation. Sometimes it is not so much the conscience or the heart as the intellect that is driven to and fro with the various winds of opinion, and unable to rest in religious belief. Perhaps there never was a time—I do not think there ever was a time—when more various winds of temptation and greater intellectual



perplexity on the chief matters prevailed than this present time in which we live. But many are saved from giving way to fear, misgiving, and unbelief by the hope which they cannot bear to pluck from their breasts. Conceived by a devout feeling, the heart insists, "I have felt the hope." Some are saved by saying, "I have been buoyed up by a hope; I have been purified, and strengthened, and kept steadfast by a hope; do not tell me that this hope is a mere illusion of mine."

But to keep to our figure. The shipwreck of faith is well prevented by the strong anchor of hope. My friends, there is no perfect calm. There is not on the sea; there is not in life. Look at the ship at anchor in a quiet roadstead. It seems to be quite still, "like a painted ship on a painted ocean." But she is not still; she is never still. She feels the ground-swell when the winds and the waves are quiet. Though it seems here, at this distance, to be still, go on board and lie down on the deck and look up to the masthead, and then you will find that it sways to and fro against the sky.

And just so there is no calm in this present time. There is always something playing on the keel, therefore the masthead sways. Is the heart swayed to and fro secretly? Do not be afraid of that. The thing to be afraid of is drifting. That is how people, I was going to say, go to perdition—they *drift* to perdition. But if we have anchored there is no drifting towards the eternal death. The anchor is sure and steadfast.

But I have mentioned more than once the anchorage ground. What does that mean? You must put your hope in the promise of eternal life, which God has given to us in Christ Jesus. Some may say, "No need of Christ Jesus! Our promise is in God. It is enough for us to

know that God is merciful. What more do you want ? ” The great Father is merciful. And they talk very freely that they will be all right ; they are quite comfortable because there is a Supreme beneficence without any Christ Jesus. I tell you what they make me think of. Of a man that proposed to anchor his vessel in the midst of the Atlantic—in the abysses where it is perhaps two miles straight down ! What use will an anchor be there ? So, my dear friends, there is mercy in God ; but I must take the mercies of God where it is possible for me, and offered to me, and that is in Christ Jesus. I am not going to anchor out yonder, but in the anchorage ground. I am not going to hope merely in the general character of God, but in the truth of the Gospel, to which, in the ages past, He has called His people : “ The righteous have hope in His death.” In the “ Pilgrim’s Progress,” you remember how *Christian*, after *Faithful* had died a martyr’s death, found in the way one *Hopeful*, and was very much helped by him. When they had to cross the river, the river that has no bridge, the river through which every one must pass at the end of the journey, *Christian* began to sink. That is the case of the good man who has not a happy deathbed. Do not judge people’s goodness by their deathbeds ! *Christian* began to sink, and crying out to his good friend *Hopeful*, said, “ I sink in the deep waters ; the billows go over my head ; all the waves go over me.” Then said the other . “ Be of good cheer, my brother ! I feel the bottom, and it is good.’ There is hope, the anchor ; you see the anchor holds ground. And yet again, when he could scarce keep poor *Christian’s* head above the water, *Hopeful* endeavoured to comfort him, saying ; “ Brother ! I see the gate ! ” First : “ I feel the ground ” ; second, “ I see the gate, and see

Him standing by it to receive us. On ! I feel the ground ; and I see the gate !” The gate of hope, filled with all joy and peace ; and believe that you may abound in “ hope by the power of the Holy Ghost.”

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## II. *Outlines on Texts for the Church's Year.\**

(WITH FULL REFERENCES TO SERMONS ON THE SAME.)

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### I.—FIRST SUNDAY IN TRINITY.

(*From the Second Evening Lesson.*)

#### THE RACE AND THE PRIZE.

“Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us,” etc.—HEB. xii. 1, 2.

*Introduction.*—The writer has been taking his readers through the splendid battle-roll of the heroes of faith. And this with a two-fold object :—

(a) To show them that in becoming Christians they have not broken away from the grand historical past, of which, as patriots, they had right to be proud.

(b) But far more to show them that not a few in this sad and wicked world have been pure and good, and that the theory that apparent holiness is nothing but perfected hypocrisy is cynical and false.

I. *God has set a goal before us and bidden us run a race.* Of what importance for us to know that task before us not beyond our powers. Proof that if *we* run race *we* can attain goal in strength of God, is that many thousands, weak as we are,

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tempted as we are, of like passions with ourselves, have done so, have resisted the temptations of world, flesh, and devil, and in face of all persecution and suffering have lived devout and noble lives. This the cloud of witnesses.

II. *In this throng of the greater heroes of unselfishness the writer mingles multitudes also of the nameless saints.* Since the world reeks with anonymous baseness, happily, also, always and everywhere, it is rich with anonymous goodness. Myriads of the faithful have not been among the famous. Not so difficult to accept partial failure in this life if there be behind it hope of ultimate success and reward, but to give up all—to brave such a death as Paul braved, of which scarce a breath of tradition has survived; to die as Savonarola, Henry Martyn, David Livingstone died—this is faith and this is martyrdom. For what is this but to live as Christ lived, and to die as Christ died? The salt of the earth, the healing of the world, are in its nameless saints. Wherefore, then, seeing that this bright cloud of witnesses encircles us of those who, whether famous or obscure, witnessed to God by their lives and by their deaths, let us, too, with patience, without flagging, without murmur, run our appointed race, our course bent steadfastly towards the same goal, and our eye uplifted always to the same Lord.

III. *We are not to think of these witnesses as mere idle and unsympathising spectators of our earthly race.* The angels also look down upon us doubtless, but they have not run the race, and do not know its temptations and difficulties. It is only the sympathy of our invisible communion with the King of the angels, and with

“These our brothers who have gone before,  
And left their trail of light upon the shore,”

which can cheer and strengthen us.

IV. *The great cloud of witnesses tell us all by their lives that what they look to behold is not our wealth, or success, our greatness, or our earthly fame.* Christ's voice and the voice of His faithful servants call us not to pleasure, but to endurance; not to what weakness likes, but to what duty demands. Other voices summon to the repose of indulgence, to the banquet of the prodigal, to the swinish husks of those who would have men live like brutes. If you would serve God and your country, you

must obey a far different call. When Garibaldi published his famous proclamation after the storming of Rome,—“Soldiers, I have nothing to offer you but hunger and thirst, hardship and death,” he found many a gallant youth to follow him. And will not you obey the call of your Master, Christ? Will you not register a vow that with the cloud of witnesses around you, and with your faith fixed on Christ, you, too, will stand at the starting-points, pledged to run the noble race?

V. But pause. *Have you considered the one condition which must be observed before you can run any race at all?* It is this “laying aside”—stripping off at once—“every weight” and cumbrance of every kind, “and the sin which doth so easily beset.”

(a) Word rendered “weight” an athletic term; means *superfluous flesh*. Writer of this epistle, like Paul, had perhaps looked with sympathy on the young runners stripped for the contest, and knew well what bursts of derisive laughter would rise from the crowd if one of the votaries of pleasure, flaccid and effeminate, should present himself as a candidate; knew that if such an one aspired to run he would have to undergo the strictest training until he had acquired strong muscles and vigorous frame. Training could not be gone through in a moment, but *resolution* to undergo it could be taken in a moment. And just so in spiritual world. If the witnesses be too holy to deride, yet they must weep tears such as angels weep, when a Christian thinks to run the great race of God, enfeebled by self-indulgence, or daubed with the thick clay of earthly possessions and desires.

(b) Is there anything more demanded? Yes. “Laying aside the easily-besetting—*i.e.*, closely-fitting—sin.” Here you have the very heart of the matter. Is there one sin nearer and dearer to you than all the rest? *That* must at all costs be conquered and abandoned. Not for preacher to invade the sacred privacy of his hearers’ hearts. But let each one of us stand before the tribunal of his own conscience, and confess his sin to God and himself. The guilty king in the great tragedy asks,—

“Can I be pardoned and retain th’ offence?”

To such a prayer there is but one answer:—that God scorns a heart divided with Satan; that He will have no reservations;

that you cannot drive bargains with God (2 Cor. vi. 14—16; Matt. v. 29, 30).

There, then, is the course before you, and there the goal, and there the cloud of witnesses. Ay, but,

VI. *At the end of the course is the Lord of your life, "the Author and Perfecter of your faith."* Fix your eyes on Him. Be quick-eared to listen to His voice. And He will crown you with the crown of righteousness, and welcome you at last with the words, "Servant of God, well done!"

*Application.* Are you ready to begin the race? If not, when will you be? When will you find it easier than now?

*Archdeacon Farrar.*

Westminster Abbey, Nov. 5th, 1882, and July 27th, 1884.

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## II.—SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

*(Five Outlines on the Gospel for the Day.)*

### THE GREAT SUPPER.

"A certain man made a great supper and bade many," etc.—LUKE xiv. 16—24.

#### I. THE SUPPER AND THE INVITATION.

*Introduction.* "Son of man came eating and drinking." Had He not done so, much of His teaching and example would have been lost to us. Here at table of one of chief Pharisees. Out of circumstances and conversation necessity of altering this parable arose. First application of it to the men who sat at meat with Him, and Jews as a nation. But it also has an abiding meaning—a meaning for us.

I. *Comparison between the Gospel provision and a feast.*

1. The physical wants of men are continually in Scripture employed as figures of their spiritual needs. And for the latter, as for the former, there is abundant supply. Do men thirst? Living water. Are they a-hungred? Bread from heaven.

2. Not a solitary meal, however, but a *feast*. In the Gospel we have not only provision for our individual wants, but fellowship one with another.

II. *Time at which the invitation was sent.* "At supper-time." Feast has been long preparing: At length, "in the fulness of time," it is ready. And no fuller further feast will be offered. It is *the last meal of the day*.

III. *The terms of the invitation.*

"Come"; gracious when might have been peremptory.

"All things are now ready."

(a) Nothing lacking that any hungering, thirsty soul can need.

(b) "*Now ready*," and therefore now is the invitation issued, and "now is the accepted time."

IV. *The expected guests.* "Them that were bidden." They had already received the summons in anticipation. God has wonderful patience with us. Not until He sees that men have altogether hardened their hearts against Him does the word go forth, "None of those men which were bidden shall taste of My supper."

## II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF THE EXCUSE.

*Introduction.* "They all." A few only among the Jews responded to the call, and so great was the disproportion between number of those who refused and number of those who accepted, that even in sober history, still more in parable, it might be said, "They all."

I. *In seeking to apply this parable to ourselves, the people of to-day*, I shall not for a moment deem it necessary to maintain that so great a disproportion exists among us. God forbid that, because the parable was once almost literally true of the Jewish people, it should always be true of all men! Latter part of parable itself would lead us to expect that the highways and hedges of the world would yield a supply of guests such as the Holy Land and the chosen people had failed to yield.

II. Still it is the case that *many to whom the gracious message comes begin to make excuse*. Even in these days there are those to whom the invitation is first addressed.

1. Look at this England of ours. Her splendid history; her spiritual freedom; the rich heritage she has received from the past; her open Bible; her churches and schools, etc. But have we, as a people, taken God to be our God? Think of the intellectual pride among us, which now, as of old, calls the Gospel "foolishness"; of the many who make Mammon their god; of the multitudes who bow before the gaily-decked shrine of degrading pleasures; of the millions of our fellow-countrymen who attend no place of worship. We are a Christian people in name, it is true, but of the great bulk of our population can it be said to be more than in name? Ah, friends, "the isles which have waited for His law" are receiving God's truth nowadays. Shall it be that Madagascar, India, China, etc., will rise up in the day of judgment to condemn *us*; or that of this nation the plaintive words shall ever be spoken, "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day," etc.?

2. But people can listen very complacently to a general indictment. It is when the truth confronts them as Nathan stood before David, and, shaking its finger in their faces, says: "*Thou art the man*," that the voice of conscience also makes itself heard. Is it not true then of some of you who are in possession of light and knowledge which leave you no excuse, that you are nevertheless making excuses all along, that your whole attitude towards religion is one of excuse-making?

III. And is it not a fact that *the excuses which men make are born of their indifference*?

The men in the parable did not absolutely refuse; did not proclaim lustily to their intending host; did not begin to call him ugly names; did not call in question his kindness; did not even insinuate that the meal would not be likely to suit their palates, or would be insufficient to still their hunger. They merely begged to be excused. "Highly honoured, etc.; really would have been most glad, but unfortunately something or other had just come in the way," etc. And so with many of us. Respect for Divine things. Would not for the world be irreverent. But one thing you will not do, you will not make up your mind to be in earnest in the matter of religious decision. Indifference stronger than

hate, worse than avowed opposition, offers the resistance of a dead weight. You may, with comparative ease, direct a river into another channel, but you will find it a difficult thing to remove a stagnant pond into the next field.

### III. THE THREE EXCUSES.

I. *Let us see what they have in common.* "I have bought a piece of ground"; "I have bought five yoke of oxen"; "I have married a wife." Well! there is nothing blameworthy in any of these acts. Land must be bought and sold. And if a man may legitimately purchase a field, it follows, as a matter of course, that he may legitimately plough it. Further, when God made Adam master of the beasts of the field, He said, "It is not good that the man should be alone, I will make him a helpmeet for him." The three excuses then are based upon transactions which are not wrong in themselves, which are even enjoined upon us, either by the duty we owe to each other, or by distinct command of God; transactions without which the commerce of the world, the well-being of mankind, nay, mankind themselves, would soon be at a standstill, and eventually cease to exist. Where, then, is the mischief? Here. These men represent the vast number of those who do not forget the duties which they owe to themselves, who neglect not to be just to their fellow-men, who are upright, trustworthy, amiable, but who ignore the duty they owe to their God.

But further, they come under condemnation not only in spite of the assumed rectitude of their characters, but even *because of* their absorption in pursuits which we have seen to be legitimate and proper in themselves. Not that there is anything in religion to make it clash with the performance of the duties which pertain to this life. I believe that a man does everything better, buys and sells to greater *ultimate* advantage, marries with greater prospects of happiness, etc., who does all "as unto the Lord, and not as unto men."

But the parable teaches that there are many things beside absolute sins which keep men out of the kingdom of God. That is, that men turn into occasions of sin things which God intended to be sources of good to them. And this they do when they reverse God's law; place first the things which are seen and

temporal ; feed and clothe the body, cultivate the mind, but leave the spirit unattended to ; live to better their circumstances at the expense of themselves. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God," etc.

II. *Let us look at the excuses singly.*

1. "I have bought a piece of ground, and must needs go and"—what?—"and *see* it." What else could he do? He could not devour it, or carry it home with him. He could only see it, and turn his back upon it ; go and see it the next day, and turn his back upon it again ; go and see it all his life long, and then turn his back upon it for ever. Lawyers call land "real property." But in what sense is it real if a man cannot take it with him when he dies? The time will come when six feet of earth will suffice for all the requirements even of a landlord. Chief pleasure, however, which the owner of a piece of land takes in its possession is in looking at it, and saying to himself, "This is mine." Now, there are two ways in which men may look at green fields and trees. Simply as *their* possessions, or as the beautiful works of God. The latter the highest and purest form of pleasure. The man in the text was not seeking after it, but it is open to us all—even the poorest of us—to cultivate the habit which

"Nourishes imagination in her growth,  
And gives the mind that apprehensive power,  
By which she is made quick to recognise  
The moral properties and scope of things."

2. "I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them." This man will not be likely to succeed either in this world or the next. He stakes his all upon what belongs to this life. And yet even with regard to this life he has not common prudence. Many men who think little or nothing of the future life have at least the poor consolation that they are making the best of this. But here is a man who gives up all for this world, and yet is so foolish as to buy five yoke of oxen without having proved them. Utter worldliness, like vaulting ambition, "overleaps itself."

In the excuses which both these men make there seems to be a consciousness of wrong-doing. They put their refusal very humbly: "I pray thee have me excused." But the third has not even a suspicion that there is any insufficiency in his excuse. He says—



3. "I have married a wife, and therefore I *cannot come*." There is no "if," or "but" about the matter with him. As quaint Matthew Henry says, "Our affection to our relations often proves a hindrance to us in our duty to God. Adam's excuse was, 'The woman that Thou gavest me persuaded me to eat'; this man's, 'I have married a wife, and the woman has persuaded me *not* to eat.'" We cannot love our dear ones too well, if only God has our supreme affection. But neither our possessions nor our affections must be permitted to draw us away from Him. "Then began Peter to say unto Him, Lo, we have left all and followed Thee. And Jesus answered and said . . ." (Mark x. 29—31).

#### IV. THE REPORT OF THE SERVANT AND THE ANGER OF HIS LORD.

I. *The servant's report to his master of the slight which had been put upon his gracious invitations.* "So that servant came," etc. Think of the heavy heart of this poor man as, knowing well the goodness which had prompted his Master, he yet met with nothing but rebuffs and refusals. Even so is it oftentimes with the ministers of Christ. They, too, are messengers sent to bid men to a feast. They, too, often discouraged at the reception which men accord to their message. They, too, must *give an account* to their Lord (see Heb. xiii. 17).

1. Now and in this life in communion with God. Though as yet they cannot know for certain the results of their work. But

2. Time is coming when they shall "know even as also they are known," when "secrets of all hearts shall be revealed." Then shall they render their final account.

Awful nature of ministerial responsibility. "Brethren, pray for us."

II *The effect which the servant's report had upon his lord.* "The master of the house was angry." At whom? Not at servant, for he had done his duty, but at those who had refused invitation. And God is angry, although He is our Father,—nay, *because* He is our Father,—with those of us who reject His offers. The gentle Saviour will be the awful Judge. "The wrath of the Lamb."

III. *The resolution to which the master of the house in his righteous indignation came.* "None of those men," etc.



A very natural conclusion for a *man* to come to you will admit, but not, you would fain believe, indicative of the way in which the long-suffering Father treats men. No single parable can embrace all the aspects of truth. Not the purport of this parable to illustrate long-suffering of God, but indifference of man and consequences of it.

But this let me say. A door may be pulled to from without, as well as pushed to from within. God shuts the door of His banquetting-chamber in no man's face who has, or yet may have, the faintest desire to enter.

#### V. THE INVITATION BROADCAST.

We must avoid the inference, from the latter part of this parable, that it is anger at some men which impels God to make offers of mercy to other men. We can never believe, for instance, that if the Jews as a nation had accepted Christ, the Gentiles would never have had the Gospel preached to them. No, it is love alone that comes to any man and offers him forgiveness. "God so loved the *world*," etc. And the command of the true Master of the feast to His servants is expressed in the words, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." Bearing this in mind, then, lest the exigencies of the story should lead us to entertain unworthy ideas of the dealings of God with men, we may turn once more to the parable, and learn—

I. *That Christ's servants are bidden to carry His Gospel to the very lowest of mankind.*

II. *That Christ's servants are bidden to lose no time in setting about their Master's work.* "Go out quickly."

III. *That Christ's servants are bidden to be persistent and importunate in their appeals to men.* "Compel them to come in."

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Verse 21: "The Spiritual Charity of Christendom," Martineau, "Hours of Thought," vol. ii., p. 254.

Verses 22—24: "The Gospel-Supper," Whitefield, "Works," vol. vi., p. 20; "Acceptance of Religious Privileges Compulsory," Newman, "Parochial Sermons," vol. iv., p. 52.

Verses 22—23: "Kingdom of God Thrown Open," Hubbard, *Christian World Pulpit*, vol. xiii., p. 378.

Verse 22: "The Gospel-Feast," Dobie, *Homiletic Quarterly*, vol. iii., p. 129; "Yet there is Room," Anon., *Christian World Pulpit*, vol. ix., p. 373; Spurgeon in "Three Hundred Outlines on the New Testament," p. 52.

Verse 23: "The Urgent Invitation," Cuyler, *Study* (1879, Jan. to June), p. 499; "Love's Invitation," Cuyler, *Christian World Pulpit*, vol. xv., p. 215; "Religion in London," Bishop Fraser, *Christian World Pulpit*, vol. xvi., p. 1.

Verse 24: Thos. Arnold, "Sermons" 2nd series, sermon xiii.

### III.—THIRD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

(*From the Epistle.*)

#### HUMAN CARES AND THE DIVINE CARE.

"Casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you.—I PETER v. 7.  
VALUE of injunction in former half of text depends entirely upon its latter half, for until we can get men to believe in care of God

for them, we shall never persuade them to cast all their care upon Him. Must be confessed, however, that it is not easy for any of us adequately to realise what these words, "He careth for you," mean.

There are those who declare that the words have no meaning. They see no "He" in the universe. True, they speak of nature, not only with deep reverence, but in terms so warmly personal, that we are sometimes tempted to think that their science has found what their faith had lost; but, if we may trust their own assertions, it is not so, for they find no evidence in nature of a living God.

Such men can have no resource outside of themselves in times of sorrow and anxiety. No man can cast his care upon *It*. The materialist's creed fosters an inhuman quite as much as an ungodly type of character. If ever the pressure of care becomes too heavy for him to bear it alone, one of two results will follow: either the creed will break down or the man will. Hence it is that suicide has so often in history been seen to be consequence of atheism. But

II. Although atheism may be no temptation to us, *we may still find it difficult to realise that God really cares for us.*

1. Easier to believe that He cares for the universe at large, or even for this world and the human race as a whole, than that He takes any interest in us, as individuals. Too prone to think of Him as exercising some kind of care over us as a general does over his troops. But He is not a general, but a Father, and has room in His infinite heart for each one of us. We cannot rightly understand this text until it means, "He cares for *me*." Or,

2. Some one may say, "I cannot think God cares very much for me, or He would not allow me to suffer as I do, and give me this weary burden of care to bear day by day." Like child complaining of having hard lessons to learn. But are we not assured that our very trials and anxieties are the pledge and token of God's love? If we had no care, we might begin to doubt whether God cared for us.

III. Then, the practical lesson of the text is this,—that *if we lift the burden of our care at all, we are to lift it FOR THE LAST TIME, that we may cast it upon God*. Once there it becomes God's care, not ours. Because God cares for us, He will care for it

IV. *The little word "all" includes even the trivial and passing anxieties of each day.* To suppose that some cares are too insignificant to take to God in prayer is not to honour Him, but unnecessarily to burden ourselves. It has been said that "white ants pick a carcass quicker and cleaner than a lion does," and so these little cares may even more effectually destroy our peace than a single great trouble, if, in our mistaken reverence for God's greatness, we refuse to cast them upon Him.

*Rev. G. S. Barrett, B.A., Norwich.*

From *The Congregationalist* for 1877.

#### REFERENCES TO OTHER SERMONS, ETC.

"The Wisdom of God in His Providence," Archbishop Tillotson, "Sermons," vol. viii., p. 140; "Casting all our Care on God," C. Simeon, "Works," vol. xx., p. 275; "On Anxiety in Worldly Matters," Sydney Smith, "Sermons" (1846), p. 96; "God's Care for His People," E. A. Farrar, *British Pulpit*; (with Eph. iv. 30) "God not an Abstraction," Ed. White, *Christian World Pulpit*, vol. ii., p. 40; "God as our Care-Bearer," Noble, *Christian World Pulpit*, vol. iv., p. 245, and same in *Study*, vol. i.; "Freedom from Care," Beecher, *Christian World Pulpit*, vol. xviii., p. 332; Knox-Little in "Three Hundred Outlines on New Testament," p. 245; "Our Helpful King," "Sermons to Boys and Girls," 2nd series, p. 133; (with verse 6) Thos. Arnold's "Sermons," vol. ii., No. 24; and see Parker's "Ad Clerum," *Pulpit Analyst*, vol. iv., p. 427, and "Apostolic Life," vol. iii., p. 317.

#### IV.—FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

*(From First Evening Lesson.)*

##### THE MAN AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART.

"The Lord hath sought Him a man after His own heart."—I SAM. xiii. 14.

THIS expression clung to David, as "Friend of God" became title of Abraham. St. Paul, in the Acts (xiii. 22), quotes the words without apparent misgiving. Yet no words have given rise to more fierce invectives against the Scriptures,—none, perhaps, carry on their front more serious difficulties. Men say, "*This*,

then, is the man after the heart of your God,—*this* man, who abused his despotic power, and coolly sacrificed the life of a brave and honourable man to cover the consequences of his own outrageous wrong-doing. If *this* be your God, talk no more of high morality, and lofty purity, as things which are proper to His service." Such reproaches, however, are unfounded, for

I. *It is plain by a reference to the context that the title "after God's own heart" was only comparative, not absolute.* Meant that, by the side of Saul, David was the man who attracted favour and confidence of God. Nor is it difficult, with history of Saul and Psalms of David before us, to understand what it was in David which caused him to be preferred. The *faith* by which he walked with God; gained the victory over Goliath; became at all worthy to be God's vicegerent; remained unconquered, though not unhurt, through many a defeat and fall, through a life-long struggle.

II. *Title was given him in early days, before his life had become overcast with the cloud of sin and error.* "The Lord hath sought Him a man," etc. And when God found him he was still the David of the 23rd Psalm. Do not say that God did not love him after his fall, or did not give him large praise until his death, and after his death. But he is certainly never called the man after God's own heart again.

III. *David's repentance was far more deep than appears on the surface of the narrative.* How deep and true it was we know from 51st Psalm, which has supplied so many millions of penitent souls with very words they wanted.

IV. *It is most necessary to bear in mind, in considering the career of David, the severity of punishment which followed upon David's sin.* Not only death of child, but turbulence and violence of his family, unnatural rebellion and miserable death of his best-loved son. And then there was punishment even more terrible and subtle: deterioration of his own character. His last days were most painful of all. Let any one look at David's old age, and say whether the justice of God is not an inexorable and an awful thing. For every sin there is forgiveness, but for all that it may be that every sin leaves its mark, its effect for ill.

*Rev. R. Winterbotham, M.A., B.Sc., etc.*

From "Sermons and Expositions."

As specimen of a quite different treatment of the text we give below a sketch of a homily by the Rev. Bryan Dale, M.A., taken from the excellent *Pulpit Commentary*, published by Messrs. Kegan Paul, and Co.

*Introduction* 1. Uttered by Samuel on the occasion of his *reproving* Saul.

2. Formed part of announcement of *purpose of God* to appoint another.

3. Descriptive of David's character *in contrast to that of Saul*.

In a man after God's own heart (such as David was) there is:—

- I. The recognition of the will of God as supreme.
- II. The conviction of the call of God to His service.
- III. Devotion to the honour of God from the heart.
- IV. Dependence on the help of God for success.
- V. Repentance at the reproof of God on account of sin.
- VI. Sympathy with the people of God in their experience.
- VII. Sincerity in his whole relation to God, and in the main course of his life.

#### REFERENCES TO OTHER SERMONS, ETC.

"The Man," etc., H. Goodwin, "Sermons," vol. iii., p. 136; R. Gordon, "Christ as made Known," etc., vol. ii., p. 465; D'Oyly, "Sermons," vol. i., p. 291; and see Newman's "Miscellanies," p. 50; Maurice, "Prophets and Kings of Old Testament," sermon iii.; Maclaren's "Life of David as Reflected in His Psalms," p. 208, etc.; Edersheim's "Israel under Samuel, Saul, and David," p. 63; Bishop Wilberforce, "Heroes of Hebrew History," p. 234, etc.; Geikie's "Hours with the Bible," vol. iii., p. 268; Geikie's "Old Testament Portraits," p. 203 (s. v., Absalom); Kingsley's "Pentateuch and David," p. 264; Stanley's "Jewish Church," vol. ii., pp. 92-3; W. M. Taylor's "David," pp. 290, 324; "Carlyle on Heroes," lecture ii., "The Hero as Prophet"; Hazlitt's "Round Table," No. xv.; Voltaire, "Raison par Alphabet," vol. i., p. 234.

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### III. Professor Henry Drummond.\*

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WHAT the Free Church of Scotland lost by the expulsion of Dr. Robertson Smith it seems to have gained in Professor Henry Drummond. Both are young men, and both have already done such work as will bring them lasting fame. Both are orthodox men, but their orthodoxy has very different standpoints. Whilst the one does not hesitate to deny direct and Divine inspiration to many parts of the Bible, the other is able to justify the whole.

Henry Drummond is a native of Stirling, thirty-three years of age. He is second son of Mr. Henry Drummond, head of the well-known firm of Scottish seedsmen. He is younger brother of the late Peter Drummond, whose name is world-famed as the founder of the Stirling Tract Society. Educated at the high school of his native town, he in due course proceeded to Edinburgh University, where he graduated. He did not display great brilliance as a scholar, but went through the arts and divinity curriculum with credit and success. Henry Drummond early showed a strong predilection for outdoor life. He seems to have had an instinctive leaning towards scientific investigation, and no opportunity of encouraging his *penchant* was thrown away. In natural history his knowledge of a special and exhaustive character brought its own reward. Six years ago he was appointed to a lectureship in Glasgow Free Church College, on "Natural History and Science," which gave him renewed and abundant facilities for the pursuit of his favourite study. His attainments, his practical acquaintance with the subject, the luminous form in which he explained facts and theories, attracted the notice of the foremost scientists and he rapidly became an authority.

\* We reprint this sketch from *The Boston Literary World*, May 2nd, 1885.

Up to a year ago Mr. Drummond's position was simply that of a lecturer. About twelve months since, a wealthy and intelligent adherent of the Free Church, Mr. James Stevenson, gave £6,000 to Glasgow College for a chair of "Natural Science." In accordance with the laws of the Church, this handsome liberality had to be formally accepted. Accordingly, at the General Assembly of the Church in May 1884, the matter came to be discussed. Visions of Darwinian and other heterodoxy seem to have troubled the mental eyes of many of the ministers, and opposition to the establishment of the professorship was openly and by vote manifested. Principal Rainy, who is a statesman in diplomacy, in moving the acceptance of Mr. Stevenson's munificent offer, observed that some difference of opinion had been expressed with regard to chairs of natural science, but he reminded the House that the quarter whence the most emphatic approbation and recommendation of the steps taken by the Church in this direction proceeded, had been a very authoritative quarter indeed. At the time of the disruption, he remarked, and for many years afterwards, they had had in the Free Church a number of men equally distinguished for their scientific position and their cordial personal interest in revealed religion and the Church. It was such men as Sir David Brewster, Hugh Miller, and the great body who clustered round them, who were in favour of the establishment of a natural science chair as part of the system of education of young men for the ministry. This speech of Dr. Rainy's carried his hearers with him, and the chair was accepted by an overwhelming majority. This was on the 27th of May. Four days later—on the 31st—the Assembly had to consider who was to be the first professor—little more than a nominal piece of business. In a highly humorous speech, the Rev. Andrew Melville of Glasgow remarked that when the chair in which a man sat was hoisted, they could not help hoisting the man who sat in it, unless, indeed, they roughly tumbled him out. In seconding the motion, which it is needless

to say was carried without a dissentient voice, the well-known Dr. J. H. Wilson added that Mr. Drummond, besides being one of the ablest scientists, was one of the most powerful evangelists in the Church.

Young in years, Henry Drummond is old in knowledge. As has been already indicated, his career has had some eventful experiences. He has two distinct natures inextricably blended—the scientific and the evangelical. Five years ago he was the companion of Professor Geikie on a six months' tour to the Rocky Mountains. Two years ago he was commissioned by the Glasgow Lakes Company to penetrate to Central Africa, and report upon the kind of products and commodities the country could yield in the way of commerce, paying special attention to the district lying between the Lakes Nyanza and Tanganyika—a commission which he fulfilled to the satisfaction of all concerned. This is the most important trip he has ever taken. His journey extended from June 1883, to April 1884. Since he came back, Professor Drummond has given the public in various ways the benefit of his observations in the Dark Continent. He has twice recently lectured on the subject to the Philosophical Institution of Edinburgh, and no longer ago than last Wednesday night, he read a long and interesting paper to the members of the Glasgow Philosophical Society.

Turning from his scientific to his evangelical nature, we find Professor Drummond a Christian of a strong aggressive type. Several years ago he was engaged by the congregation of Penfield Free Church, Glasgow (Dr. Marcus Dodd's), to take charge of one of their mission stations—that of Possilpark, and there he laboured assiduously for a considerable period, delivering, Sunday after Sunday, without intermission, the Gospel message in the simple, direct language of which he is so great a master, to the working population who reside in that quarter. In the Moody and Sankey mission he took deep interest, travelling about incessantly with them. Recently he has devoted himself to missionary work amongst the university

students. So great is the charm of the man, so beautiful is his earnestness, that his appeals are resistless. For ten weeks prior to the end of the session which is just closed, he went from Glasgow to Edinburgh weekly, and held meetings with the students in the Odd Fellows' Hall. The attendance, comprised chiefly of "medicals," averaged from seven hundred to one thousand regularly, and so effective have the services been, that now that vacation has commenced, deputations from the ranks of the students are going out all over the country on mission enterprises. The experiment is as novel as its results are surprising. For instance, out of a fine athletic football team of fifteen, twelve are amongst Professor Drummond's voluntary missionaries. The movement has excited the sympathetic interest of the professors and assistant professors of Edinburgh, and at the time of writing, there is every appearance of its extension to the sister universities.

Until the publication of his "Natural Law in the Spiritual World," Professor Drummond's writings have only appeared in periodical form in the magazines. He writes mostly to *Good Words*, and a contribution from his pen will appear in the next (the May) number of that old-established monthly. It will be entitled, "The White Ants of Africa."

In scientific circles the "Natural Law" has given rise to much difference of opinion, and there has been a tendency in certain quarters to sneer the book down. Professor Drummond is too robust physically and mentally to be affected by criticism of that sort, and a knowledge of the man should be sufficient to show that whatever his conclusions, "out of the abundance of his heart his mouth speaketh."

JAY.

LIVERPOOL, ENGLAND, *April 7th*, 1885.

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## IV. Professor Drummond's Addresses at Grosvenor House.\*

### I. CHRISTIANITY *v.* EVOLUTION.

PROFESSOR DRUMMOND delivered his second address at Grosvenor House on May 3rd before a crowded audience, on the subject "Christianity looked at from the standpoint of Evolution." Most of us, remarked the learned professor, have accepted the doctrine of evolution in some form or other. It was the great thought of the century, perhaps the greatest the world has ever yet found out. It cannot be proved yet, but that does not matter much. Great things and great thoughts fill the mind and make their impression. When we look at the stars we see a multitude apparently of the same colour, but really they were of different colours—blue, violet, red, white, and yellow—the spectroscope showed us these were all the same, but in different stages of cooling. This is evolution. We need not inquire as to the why or wherefore at present. When we tried to apply this to our faith it had a great deal to tell us. Our theology being merely the human version of Divine truth we are often obliged to reconstruct it. The stock argument against religion was that the Bible was preposterous, incredible, inconsistent, and immoral, and we cannot deal with this argument except by evolution. The Bible was not a book according to evolution, but sixty-six books. It is a library containing history, poetry, and theology. We cannot get any principle to enable us to read all the books with the same ease and enjoyment. The Book of Genesis must be regarded as presenting truth to children's minds, and

\* We reproduce these from our energetic contemporary, *The Christian Commonwealth*.

the professor illustrated this idea by George Macdonald's poem, "The Baby," not literally true, but true for the child. So Moses gave truth in the form of a poem. If you say it is a scientific book I give it up, but if you regard it as a poem then I can deal with it. One great difficulty was *the Fall*. Theology gives us its version, and it appears after all not a fall but a rise. Another difficulty was the peculiar morals of the Old Testament, the armies slain, and the mode of expressing the Commandments, as the third Commandment. All truth has had an evolution, or it would not have been intelligible. Ideas could not have been explained to the child-race except in forms which they understood. All the points where sceptics and earnest seekers stumble are being met by evolution. A different class of difficulty concerned our ordinary life—namely, the providence and goodness of God. A gentleman once said that it was impossible to believe God was good because his life had been so embittered and every hope of happiness removed. It was certainly mysterious, but not unanswerable. It all depended on the view you hold of life. Was life a holiday or an evolution? a school or a playground? If a holiday, God was inexplicable, but not on the theory of evolution, which was that life was a development. If life were a holiday it was not worth living, but an insult and a mockery; but if a discipline then all became plain. We were not to enjoy ourselves, but to pass on to a higher life. Another class of difficulty was that of accepting miracles. No need of accepting any miracle but the Resurrection, and this science makes possible, and even probable, and it is illustrated by the jelly fish and the lava of the dragon fly. We have a fact that only perfect and true Being ever lived in this world, and though He died yet He lived again. Holiness will always rise again. They who have Christ shall rise again and know the power of His resurrection, shall be with Him and go with Him. The professor then passed from objections to more positive and constructive



themes. Christianity seemed to many to have no connection with the rest of nature, but was regarded as a mere ex-crescence. It will be possible to show one day that Christianity is a further evolution, a continuation of these processes going on from the beginning. There is nothing mysterious about inspiration. "The pure in heart shall see God." We needed the faculty educated. Revelation does not consist in writing, but in truth alike in the heart, the Bible, and nature. The programme of Christianity was issued four hundred years before Christ: in 61st chapter of Isaiah, first three verses. There is a peculiar weight attached to these verses, because the Founder of Christianity went into a church and read them, and then said, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled." Compare this programme with the position of philanthropy or Secularism, and see if it is not higher evolution. Nothing we knew came within a thousand miles of it. All else was mere imitation. "Preach the Gospel to the meek." Here is development, nothing known before like it. Something for nothing—a gift—a Gospel. God's love for man's sin. Our idea is always connected with a bargain, we want to get some benefit. God gives us this Gospel for nothing.

"Bind up the broken-hearted." What a provision for the world! How many broken-hearted are there in this vast city? Men are supplying the body and amusing the mind, but we cannot touch the bleeding and crushed spirit. Christianity can do and does this. This is the object of it. God does this by three links of a wondrous chain—God the Father's love, Christ the Son's sympathy, and the Holy Spirit's power, and this is supplemented by another link, a man or woman as the messenger to the soul.

"Liberty to the captive." We cannot liberate from sin by moral elevation: this needs the power from the other life.

"Gives beauty for ashes." Law of beauty begins at once in the lower kingdom. The atoms will arrange themselves in forms of beauty if they have free chance. So on through all

the kingdoms. In the Christian world there are higher laws for higher ends. Christ satisfies the æsthetic nature better than anything else. In the programme of Christianity there is everything that is needed for all men. A man sitting on the burnt-out ashes of his past life can be taken by Christianity and reconstructed on a different plan of joy and peace, and righteousness and patience. This is what Christianity does for a fallen world. This is its programme for this life. The programme for the next life is not issued yet. "Eye hath not seen, neither hath ear heard it." Why stop with the present, when it is possible to go further? Christ claims us each personally. He says, "Give Me thy heart." Let this, therefore, be our life, to follow Christ and obey Him.

The professor held the rapt attention of his select audience for an hour, and after a short closing prayer for the Divine teaching, the company slowly dispersed.

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## 2. NATURAL SELECTION.

PROFESSOR DRUMMOND delivered his third address at Grosvenor House on May 10th before a crowded and select audience. Among the company we noticed the Duke of Westminster, Lord Selborne, Marquis of Hartington, Lord Sherbrooke, Mr. W. E. Forster, and many others. Last Sunday, said the professor, we dealt with the subject of evolution, looked at from the standpoint of Christianity. So far from being incompatible with Christianity, evolution was really the complement. Christianity was carrying on further the process which was not yet fully developed. To-day we shall deal with a similar field of thought—namely, that of "Natural Selection," or, as Herbert Spencer translates it, "Survival of the Fittest." We are often told that so far from religion being

the survival of the fittest it is here that nature and religion part company—religion announces a blessing on the unfit, the weak, and heavy-laden ; while nature helps not. Nature sends the weakest to the wall ; but religion says it will not break the bruised reed nor quench the smoking flax. And yet the same law holds good. The fit, and the fit only, survive. Let me bring home to your imagination the meaning of the words. An island is wooded from end to end ; if we visit it in autumn we may count a thousand birds on the island ; but if we visit it again in spring we find the number reduced to a hundred. Why ? The biological answer is that only the birds of the quickest wing, the most cunning ways, and the strongest muscle have survived. Here, however, is an element which does not enter into religion, the struggle for existence. There is a limitation of the sphere in the island which makes a struggle necessary. In the spiritual world this is vastly different. There all may exist if they have the apparatus. In the heart of the island there is a little pond, which has been filled with the winter's rain. It teems with all kinds of life, fish, water-beetles, animals, etc., but as the summer goes on, and no rain falls, the pond begins to dry up, and one by one the creatures perish, but amongst the myriads of forms of life there are a few curious little tadpoles, and as if in anticipation nature has been preparing them for another and higher life, Inside there is an apparatus for breathing air being developed, and by the time the pool has dried up the organisation is finished, and while millions have died for want of water the tadpole has been transformed into a land animal. So in a higher sense the pool is drying up, and the world is passing away. These are the words of the Bible and science alike. We are told by physicists that ethereal friction is daily cooling the world, as it courses round the sun. The world is becoming smaller and smaller, and it is probable that one day it will dash with all its inhabitants into the heart of the sun, then shall the elements be dissolved with fervent heat. If in

anticipation of this great change we have developed a fitness and an apparatus for another world, happy are we ; for if not, the end of the world will be the end of life for us. We shall in all probability not live to witness this conflagration, but in all lives there is a possibility of similar catastrophes. In the dissolution of the body our pool dries up, and only those who are fit survive ; not because they are worthy—for none are worthy of eternal life—but because they are fit. In virtue of possessing this development they are eligible for continued existence. The question of personal destiny is taken out of the hands of natural selection. We are told by many that all men at last will have eternal life. God is good, they say, and it is quite out of the question that any should not survive. We know nothing about those who have no special apparatus, but we do know that those who possess a spiritual apparatus will live in the spiritual world. "He that hath not the Son hath not life." God has done everything to develop this special faculty. An opportunity is given men to prepare for this great environment. Appeals are made by conscience and by nature, and the Bible commands us to make preparation. The three glorious Persons of the Trinity have done their utmost for man, and none can fall back on generalities, such as "God is good," etc. The prospect of altering our course is diminished day by day. How difficult for an old man to change his ways ; still harder to induce these spiritual faculties of faith and love if they have been neglected. Some say they are prepared to take their chance, the whole is so dark and so difficult that they must chance their future. There is no such thing as chance. It is a question of law. Unless fit there is no chance. It is not a question of favouritism with God to select some and reject others. It is not so much a Divine, but a natural law. The question now arises, What is fitness to survive and inherit life eternal ? We think the New Testament gives mainly three conditions necessary.

I. "Without holiness no man can see the Lord"—that is,

without "wholeness"; wanting the spiritual apparatus, he is incomplete. It is the case with man. Without an eye none can see the beauty of a painting, without an ear none can hear sweet music. This will explain why many constantly speak of the dulness of religion. They do not see it because the spiritual perception is wanting. Like many articles written in our leading papers, men do not see their meaning because their apparatus is deficient. They call themselves "Agnostics"; this is their own term. Thousands of men say "No God," because they do not see Him, and they do not see because of their undeveloped faculty. To look at religion without this eye is to see nothing. A man may walk outside a cathedral and look at the glass windows. He jeers at the talk about their beauty. He sees none of it, but let him go inside, and he will join with those who praise its beauty. Here he sees a miracle depicted, and there the Person of Christ, the whole is now lit up with radiant and glowing colour. Outside religion, you can see nothing. Only inside can you see its beauty. To see the spiritual world you must be whole or holy.

II. "If any man love the world the love of the Father is not in him." Why? It is not that there is any harm in loving the world, but it's lost time—it's a mistake. If a child loves the sound of the drum, the love of finer music is not in him. So with man. If he loves the world, by that act he is incapacitated from loving God. It is a question of taste. He manifests by lower delights that he has not spiritual appetites and tastes. The Christian is not to come out of the world, but not to love it; to treat it like the pearl-diver, who works amongst rocks, and weeds, and dangers, seeking the goodly pearls. His true life is above. There is a communication with the surface, and the pure air comes down. He does not like staying down, as the Christian is ready to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. He is gathering precious pearls for his Master, and will not always stay there; but when the last pearl is gathered he will hear the call, "Come

up higher!" He has not loved the world, though obliged to be in it.

III. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His." To dwell with Christ for ever needs a Christ-like mind and spirit. Only those fit for society can live in it. Those who live in our society must have a similar heart, mind, and interests. Heaven is a select society, and all must have the family feeling and interests at heart. There must be no coolness or indifference or incompatibility. These three points constitute fitness. How can we tell whether we are fit to survive or not? Are we to wait till the Judgment Day, or is there any Judgment Day? Many object to the pictorial representation of the bar, the trumpet, the sentence, etc., and say that the whole machinery is foreign to religion. I agree with them, but this was a way of stating it to earlier powers of perception. It is quite unnecessary to have a bar; a man knows whether he is fit the moment he is brought into contact with Christ. If I attend a high-class concert I know whether it has any correspondence with me. It judges me: The moment a soul sincerely submits to God's presence or Christ's presence it sees at a glance whether it is fit or no. "Where your treasure is there will your heart be also." The very act of contact with Christ judges us. Christ came to judge the world by coming to it. Those who brought the sinful woman to Christ were judged by the very presence of Christ. One by one was judged instinctively and unerringly, and they saw at once, whatever words they used, they had no part or lot with Him. So can it be now, so will it be at the last. Confront your lives with Christ, and He will judge them. Know now whether you be fit or no. It is not religiousness, or good works, or worthiness, but fitness, and this is evidenced by having the mind of Christ. This fitness will be seen in holiness and unworldliness. This is the only life worth having. None dare judge another, for none know the secrets of the inner life. Let us judge



ourselves, that we be not judged. The object of this law of natural selection is, according to Darwin, to produce fitness, not to eliminate the unfit. This law of natural selection will keep Heaven fit. It is not to keep some out of Heaven, but to make sure of the fitness of those who enter. The last question I ask is: How is this fitness produced? Can I be made fit, and how? I think all can be made fit if they will get into the environment suitable to cultivate the faculty. I see now a white fleecy cloud crossing the sky. Where did it come from? In the slums of this great city there are poisonous vapours, and on the marshes dangerous diseases lurk. The sun shines and takes up these poisonous waters, and passes them through the purifying air, and there they now float, pure and beautiful. So can Christ change us. Look at another cloud which I see! Who are these in white array? They have been taken from the slums of the land, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. It can be done, and done now for all. Two things we must, however, do. (1) Turn our backs upon an old environment, which has been blighting our spiritual nature, those natural muddy waters and inferior faculties. When God calls us and gives us an opportunity of developing His holy image, we must turn our backs upon the world. We need not talk about giving the world up, we only need a change of taste. Like a child enamoured of a toy, if we would have him give it up we must present something more attractive, and the new taste will throw away the old toy. It is absurd to talk about giving up the world, etc., as though there was any virtue in merely doing this. We need a new taste. To be wholly occupied with the world is a mistake; it is so much taken from our better life. (2) We must live in a new environment. Abide in Christ; this is the true ethical and spiritual life. There must be a radical change. We must be wholly in this environment. We must cut off all interests in a lower life. Christ did this. The love of the world in

this sense was, with Christ, practically extinct. He made Himself of no reputation. He emptied Himself; He humbled Himself. A man is growing fast when he gets to this spirit. The man who lives in this atmosphere will grow like Christ. Sin is always abashed in Christ's presence, but to abide in that presence is to cause sin to wholly disappear. We cannot do some things in the presence of some people. Goodness must ultimately drive sin away. This was a famous doctrine of George Eliot. Some of her characters dare not do wrong in the presence of goodness. The Lord Mayor of London some time ago distributed the prizes to poor lads and others for window gardening. A lovely geranium gained the first prize, and when the owner was called, a small child with a pale face came shyly to receive the prize. The Lord Mayor thought there must be some mistake, and questioned her. She said the lady who gave her the flower when it was very small bade her keep it always in the sunshine. So in the morning she put it on the window sill, and at midday she put it in the garret window, and at evening she placed it on the stairs to catch the slanting rays of the setting sun. Day by day she thus tended it with the splendid result. So if we always keep in the sunshine our good will develop of itself, and the undeveloped bad in each one of us will gradually be destroyed, and we shall grow in grace and shed a fragrance all around us. Even now we are judged by the absence or presence of Christ. "God is not mocked; what a man sows that shall he also reap." If a man wishes to live the other life let him become fit now. As the tree falls so it lies; as a man lives so he dies; as he dies so must he be through the long years of eternity.

NOTE.—*We regret that through pressure the next article on Church Life in Britain has been held over.*

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